

WHAT NEXT?

BY The Institute of Sanskrit Studies
१५५ ५५५
३/२५
५/१२०

K. F. NARIMAN

17TH, OCTOBER, 1934

The Bombay Book Depot,

BOMBAY 4.

Price Re 1/

Printed by S. V Parulekar at the Bombay Vaibhav Press, Servants
of India Society's Home, Sandhurst Road, Girgaon, Bombay

AND

Published by D. R Dewoolkar, at the Bombay Book Depot.
Girgaon, Bombay

PREFACE

Being encouraged by the generous reception, that the public in the country in general, and the citizens of Bombay in particular, accorded to my first humble efforts in political publication "Whither Congress", I was naturally tempted to undertake a second venture in the same direction. In this determination I was partly influenced by the views expressed in the speeches and writings of late Deshbhakt Vithalbhai Patel, ex-President of the Assembly. As a result of experience gained, during the last political tour in Western countries, particularly in Ireland and America, he was greatly impressed with the necessity of political study by 'Young India' of International problems, and recent histories of national struggles for freedom in various parts of the world. It should form an essential part of the national study for every political-minded youth in the country, hence I felt that historical comparative and comprehensive political survey of all important mass up-heavals, would be of immense educative and propagandist value, as instructive and illustrative parallels, drawn from such International study, would serve as a safe and useful guide in times of similar situations arising in our country, at the same time glorious examples of other countries would inspire our youth to similar noble action. So I thought a brief encyclopaedia of important political events in the world, would be of great use for ready reference, both to national leaders and workers, as well as to students of politics, desiring historical research.

A simultaneous study of recent histories of different countries and nations, discloses a remarkable similarity and sequence of events, wherein some traits are noticeable, as peculiar and common to all, the phenomenon is more of a mass

PREFACE

psychological nature than merely political, for instance, selfish and aggressive attitude of imperialism, bureaucracy, and vested-interest all over, is more or less the same, and similarly particular common tendencies are noticed amongst the masses in all countries. Again, the part played by different religions, in different countries makes an interesting reading. The political action and re-action, like the regular flow of ebb and tide in human cycle of events, is remarkably similar in many modern national upheavals. Such common features more or less similar in principle but differing in details, are noticeable in all political evolutions all over the world, hence certain fundamental principles and problems are capable of solution by application of similar, if not the same, methods. With that object, a broad, general, comprehensive and simultaneous study of such common and universal problems, particularly, from the Indian stand-point, would always be helpful, to certain extent to solve our local tangles.

The reader of history, who views the political game from some distance, both in point of time and space, and being far removed from the actual turmoil and excitement, is in a better position to form a dispassionate and correct judgment, particularly as he himself is not affected one way or another by its results, as the actual participant in the fight on the spot. Therefore we could naturally profit by the tragic experiences of other countries and pursue particular path so as to avoid repetition of the same mistakes, that proved disastrous for others.

At the same time, it is necessary to sound a note of warning. These parallels and comparisons must be confined to some broad fundamental principles alone. If an attempt is made to follow blindly any foreign programme, in all its details and particulars, regardless of the different circum-

PREFACE

stances and surroundings of our own country, these references, instead of serving as a safe-guide, may prove to be fatal and disastrous pit-falls. Both the points, of similarity as well as of dissimilarity, must be carefully studied and weighed, so as to enable us to discriminate and decide each case according to its merits. In other words, it should have both preventive as well as positive effect.

The critic will also bear in mind that this is by no means, and was never intended to be, an exhaustive and detailed narrative of several national struggles in the world. Such an attempt would be beyond my limited capacity. Only such few points, as have a bearing on or furnish an instructive illustration and comparison to Indian problems, have been touched or referred to, the only test applied in selecting certain extracts, is to see whether particular episodes or incidents in other countries are pertinent or relevant to serve as precaution and warning to us, at the present juncture, all other historical events, howsoever important from other points of view, have been omitted.

In the last chapter, I have made an endeavour to draw such conclusions and deductions as are applicable to our present situation, from the historical survey contained in the previous pages, broadly suggesting De Valera as our political model for future policy and action.

As it was decided to hold the Congress sessions earlier, this work had to be hurried through, because a little delay in publication would defeat its own purpose. These submissions must be published before the momentous national decisions are taken at the ensuing sessions of the Congress. Hence I had to scribble these lines hurriedly, snatching a few moments here and there, between various other pressing

PREFACE

-engagements, and I have at last succeeded in completing the task just in time, a fort-night before the Congress session. The reader will therefore excuse numerous mistakes both in printing as well as in composition, that must have inevitably crept in under such emergent circumstances.

With these few words, I will submit my humble work to the generous and tolerant scrutiny of the reading public with the confidence and hope that "What Next?" will receive the same kind and patronising treatment that was accorded to "Whither Congress".

Ready-money Terrace, {
Work, 12th, October, 1934 }

K F. NARIMAN

CONTENTS



BOOK I

CHAPTER	PAGES
1 Russia	1-10
2 Turkish Experiment .	11-13
3 Egyptian Experiment	14-68
4 Ireland and India ..	69-116
5 India and Ireland	117-136
6 Rise of Sinn-Féin and Dublin Struggle	137-154
7 Easter Rebellion of 1916 and after	155-162
8. The Final Phase	163-203
9. The Final Phase—Negotiations and after .. .	204-225
10. The Final Phase—Treaty and after	226-231
11. Tactical Leadership and Political Strategy ..	232-291
Lessons from American War of Independence ...	268-291

BOOK II

12. Some Humble Suggestions for the Future ..	292-368
--	---------



DEDICATED

TO

My revered and beloved colleague

Late Deshbhakt Vithalbhai J. Patel

IN COMMEMORATION

of the First Anniversary of his death

on 22nd October 1934

THE AUTHOR

BOOK I.

“To enter or not to enter” is the question.

Some instances of decisions taken by Revolutionary and Nationalist Parties in recent political struggles with regard to the question of entry into or boycott of National Assemblies under circumstances somewhat similar to present position in India

CHAPTER I

RUSSIA.

When there was a general rising of workers and peasants in 1905 as a protest against the inhuman massacre of labourers in a peaceful procession, and when the administration was considerably paralysed by a general strike of workers on railways, posts and telegraph, printing presses, transport services, mills and other public utility services the Tsar, the most autocratic and tyrannical ruler enjoying absolute and unfettered powers was compelled to yield a little, and on 17th October 1905 he issued a proclamation granting some of the demands and promising inauguration of a “Duma”, i.e., a legislative council where persons elected by people can voice their grievances. The workers were not satisfied with this concession and continued their struggle till the

BOOK I

following year when their organisation was completely crushed and the movement suffered a great set-back for a considerable time

However, the Duma came into existence as promised, but so far as the workers and masses were concerned, it was a most reactionary and farcical body, packed with aristocrats and noblemen, all henchmen of the Tsar, with a very limited and restricted franchise and having only advisory and recommendatory powers. So far as the extremist, i.e., the Bolshevik party was concerned, there was a further serious handicap because their opponents,—capitalists, aristocrats, monarchists and clergy,—had formed a solemn pact in the Duma. The Mensheviks and Cadets, as also other constitutional parties, who corresponded to our Liberals and Moderates, and who believed in constitutional and not revolutionary methods, were also inclined more towards the pact which was called "The Black Hundred", a solid union of all monarchists and anti-revolutionaries, who were determined to put down revolutionary activities of the Bolsheviks, the extreme left-wing of the Social-Democrats. The Bolsheviks, who firmly believed in complete revolution and establishment of workers and peasants' proletariat, were at the period, and for about 12 years after, in an absolutely helpless and impotent condition so far as the Duma was concerned. Although they commanded a vast majority of workers and had the largest following amongst the masses, still owing to a very limited and autocratic franchise they could secure a small representation in the Duma. Even if they had a majority in the Duma, they would not have been able to do much as it was a sham body without any real powers. Whenever the Bolsheviks or extremists made any violent or strong speeches in the

RUSSIA

Duma, they were immediately deported to Siberia. In short, so far as the Duma was concerned, their position was much worse and much more difficult than that of the members of the Congress or Swaraj parties in the Indian Legislatures inaugurated by Montford reforms. It is therefore interesting and instructive to note the decision and the policy the Bolsheviks adopted with regard to the Duma.

With regard to this important question, we find the following reference in the "Illustrated History of the Russian Revolution", which is considered to be the most authentic and official record of the period*

"In spite of their small numbers (about 15, a very small minority) the political role of the Social-Democratic faction in the State Duma was of great importance. In these circumstances, the Mensheviks (Constitutionalists or Moderates) adopted the standpoint which had always been regarded by the representatives of the Revolutionary Proletariat as "Parliamentary Criticism". They looked upon even this "Chatter Parliament" as a panacea for all ills. Instead of using the lawful opportunities afforded by Parliament for the extension and intensification of the extra-parliamentary revolutionary movement, the Mensheviks entered the slippery downward path of parliamentary wire-pulling, adopted the bourgeois methods of parliamentary bargaining and began to compromise with the non-revolutionary bourgeoisie. The Bolsheviks declared on the contrary that one ought indeed to enter the Duma, but not for the purpose of making compromise,

* Pages 46-47, Vol I. The period refers to 1907, shortly after the first revolution was crushed and when Bolsheviks had not again come to power.

BOOK I

not in order to capitulate to the representatives of the Bourgeoisie. The Bolsheviks entered the Duma in order to unmask Tsarism and the Bourgeoisie, they went in to make propaganda for revolutionary ideas and slogans, to prepare an ideology for the next revolution.

'The 'Boycottists' who assured the proletariat of their support of the Revolutionary Cause, in fact wanted to deprive the working class of the extremely important legal means of preparing a new revolution,—important because it was during a period of reaction. Beneath their left phraseology lay a reactionary tactic they adopted a policy which would have transformed the party into an *isolated sectarian organisation*.

"Whilst they retained and consolidated the illegal skeleton organisation of the party and fused together the illegal centres of the revolutionary movement, the Bolsheviks intended to make use of all the legal means for keeping in touch with the masses in order to bring them over to the Cause of Revolution.

"The Bolsheviks understood in every congress, conference and plenary sitting of the Central Committee, the following Lenin's teachings, they must emphasise the necessity of *utilising both legal and illegal methods*.*

"This was the pledge of the cusses of the revolutionary movement in the years 1911-1914, when the working class movement was being revived after the years of reaction."

* The London Congress of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in 1907, which ended in victory for Bolsheviks. The Paris Conference called by the Central Committee in 1908. The January Plenary Sitting of the Central Committee in 1910.

RUSSIA

Thus it is clear that this was the deliberate and official policy adopted by the Party after due deliberation and discussions in successive congresses, conferences and committees, and all the important leaders, including Lenin who was the real brain behind the revolutionary movement from its inception till its triumphant conclusion, held very strong views on the subject as is apparent from the following extracts. Stalin, the most devoted disciple of Lenin and the present head of the Russian Proletariat has written a book called "Leninism" faithfully depicting the views and ideas of his great master. In that publication there is an extensive reference on the subject indicating Lenin's views on the question of "Duma" entry and also contains comments by Stalin himself strongly endorsing his views.

The references are given on pages 154-155 and again on pages 157-159. Lenin strongly advises the Party (Bolsheviks) to enter the Duma with all its defects and drawbacks, even though it may be in a small minority, helpless and impotent, with a view to expose its farcical nature and to unmask the Moderates and other parties and their leaders, as also to capture through it the imagination of the masses and thus increase their hold on them. He even recommends wherever expedient to enter into compromises, agreements and pacts, and accept even petty reforms with a view to gradually consolidate the position, with the only condition, not to stop till the complete goal is reached and the final object is achieved through all means, legal as well as illegal. Writing on behalf of the party he states "the smallest contribution (in shape of reforms) will be gratefully accepted."

On pages 92 and 93, it is further stated that Lenin was also in favour of frankly admitting blunders and

BOOK I

mistakes, if any, committed by the party, and attempting to rectify and retrace the steps instead of being guided in a wrong course led by a false sense of prestige. These admissions and self-criticisms are real signs of strength and not of weakness of a political party, which enhances its prestige.

After having given a long trial to this policy for several years, at a later period, shortly before the 1917 revolution, Lenin expresses complete satisfaction with the results achieved, and expresses himself in the following clear and emphatic terms —

*"Now that we can look back upon a complete historical period, whose connection with the periods following is already absolutely clear, it becomes obvious that the Bolsheviks could not have formed a solid nucleus of the revolutionary Working-Class Party between 1908-1914, nor could they have consolidated, strengthened and developed it, if they had not striven hard for the adoption of both legal and illegal methods of fighting and had not insisted upon participation in the most reactionary of Parliaments and in the series of other institutions controlled by reactionary legislation (such as Social Insurance etc)"**

Thus it is clear from these authentic records that the Bolshevik Party, which undoubtedly is the most advanced revolutionary party of the present age, under the advice and guidance of Lenin, the most radical revolutionary leader of modern times, deliberately adopted a policy of "Duma entry," though that body was the most reactionary one in which the party would be in an absolutely impotent

*Lenin, "Left Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder."

RUSSIA

and small minority. But after a fairly long experience, both the leader and the party were satisfied with the results achieved through participation in the proceedings of Duma. It follows logically that under better circumstances, *i. e.*, if the Assembly or Council were more liberal and progressive, and possessed some real power, in howsoever a small degree, and the party was in a position to form a majority and capture it, the same policy would have been advocated and followed with even greater emphasis and determination, with better results. The case for the Council-entry becomes stronger still when it is a question of transference of power from the hands of the foreigners to the inhabitants of the country. The only difference according to the Russian policy is that the Moderates and Constitutionalists look to the legislative councils and assemblies as the final goal or panacea for all ills, whereas the extremists treat them as a stepping stone leading to the final destination.

But there is one danger in this policy against which it is necessary to guard ourselves and on account of which most of the statesmen do not venture to experiment in that field. When men, without proper political stamina and backbone, launch into this venture, they usually consider these bodies not as mere halting places, but as the final goal and destination, and their ideology and mentality is so transformed as to convert the most ferocious fire-brand into a halting and hesitating chatterer, preferring the comforts and glamour of well-bedecked council-chambers to the rigours and hardships of prison-cells. Even the Soviet party, the strongest in modern times, in Russia, passed through such a crisis, and were it not for the iron-will and unswerving

BOOK I

determination of Lenin, perhaps Russia today would have gone no further than a bourgeois-socialistic republican parliament of the type in Germany and Central Europe since the War.

After the first revolution of February-March 1917 and the abdication of Tsar Nicholas and his brother Michael, a provisional government was formed by a coalition of all the parties in the original Duma, whose members were mostly aristocrats and capitalist landlords who had to yield to the force of circumstances which they could not resist. Though to appease the people, they issued most liberal and progressive manifesto, promising an absolute republic and a constituent assembly with adult franchise, still their policy differed fundamentally from Bolsheviks', who were aiming at a complete Proletariat State with expropriation of lands, nationalisation of industries, etc. and stoppage of war on the Russian front. The question before the Soviet Executive Government was whether it should co-operate with the Coalition Provisional Committee and send their representatives to the following resolution —

"This Conference recognises that some control over the activities of the Provisional Government must be exercised by the masses, and welcomes A. F. Kerensky's entry into the Provisional Government as the champion of the interests and liberty of the people."

Kerensky was an important officer, being Vice-President of the Petrograd Soviet Committee, and was a trusted leader of the Party. Thus, this was distinctly a step forward, and the Bolsheviks accepted a seat in the

RUSSIA

cabinet and offered whole-hearted co-operation, to a group fundamentally different in political outlook, aims and object. Without this co-operation, perhaps the Provisional Government would not have been able to function for the few months that it survived. However, here the danger to the party commenced. Kerensky, instead of leading the Provisional Government into Bolshevik channel, became gradually assimilated into that body, supporting the steps and measures, fundamentally opposed to the Bolshevik principles, such as carrying on the war operations, and gradually leading to an Assembly of a Bourgeois parliamentary type of the European pattern. If he had been allowed to follow that course uninterrupted, perhaps the whole history of Russia to-day would have been differently written and the Bolsheviks, with their ideas of a Proletariat State, would have been wiped out.

At this stage, Lenin, who was at the time still an exile in Finland, smelt the danger, and with a remarkable foresight, he discovered the drift that would ultimately undo all the work of the Revolution. So in April 1917 he came to Russia at great risk and started that famous campaign against the Provisional Government and Kerensky Party, bringing the Bolshevik Party back to the original track, and ultimately leading to the second and final October Revolution which established the supremacy Of the Proletariat*. Thus it is that Lenin is rightly described as the Father of the Revolution and founder of the modern Russian State.

These details are only necessary to emphasise the danger of adopting the "Council-entry" policy and to

* The April Thesis, by .

BOOK I

depict the other side of the picture. The essential condition to save the Party from such a pitfall is the selection of the proper type of men, strong enough to withstand the effect and resist the infection of poisonous atmosphere. If the Indian National Congress has confidence enough to produce the right type of men who would rigidly keep to the original track and not be lured into the several pitfalls and snares of which these legislative bodies usually abound, then and then alone the experiment is worth a trial. The same policy of making use of legislatures, regardless of their constitution or policy, for propaganda and educative purposes is adhered to by the Communist Party all over Europe even where the strength of the Party is reduced to one in a house of over 600, as in the case of the last British Parliament where Mr Saklatwalla was the only Communist member in the whole House.

CHAPTER II

TURKISH EXPERIMENT.

In the last chapter we dealt at some length with the Russian experiment. Though the Russian conditions and circumstances differ fundamentally from ours, though both their goal and the methods of achieving it might be different, still the great historical event, the greatest of the 20th century, certainly affords useful instructive and illuminating illustrations and examples for the world to study

Turkey furnishes another instance of National Parties and Leaders adopting both legal and illegal methods to achieve their final object and to secure emancipation of their country and people. In a way Kemal Pasha was to Turkey what Lenin was to Russia, and there is no doubt that without them, the destinies of both these countries would have been different. Kemal saw no hope of emancipation and progress of his country, till she was absolutely freed from foreign particularly British, control and interference, and also purged of the old superstitious beliefs and customs. To achieve this object it was necessary to separate the Ecclesiastical from the political power that were both then centered in the "Khalifa". Thus he had a double object to attain, both leading to the same result, firstly to free the country from foreign, and particularly British, control and encroachment, mostly exercised through the "Khalifa", and secondly, to deprive the religious head of all political power in the State. Although for a long time he set up a parallel government at Angora and a separate National Assembly, refusing to recognise the

impotent and farcical assembly at Constantinople, ultimately, when a favourable opportunity presented itself, after his great military and diplomatic achievements, he returned to the original "Assembly" in the capital, captured it as the head of the People's Party, put himself at the helm of the administration, and in that capacity, through that house and the existing constitution, achieved his final object, by getting a decree passed in the original Turkish House, practically deposing the Khalifa and depriving his successor of all political power, he thus established a republican government, furnishing another remarkable instance in modern history of a national party and its achievement of the goal by both legal and illegal means — The results prove, that his decision to avoid the other alternative, of gaining his object by waging a civil war between Angora and Constantinople, was right, and his shrewdness and diplomacy saved the country from a terrible disaster and bloodshed, which enabled him to achieve a more complete triumph by means of a bloodless revolution in the council

That a preparation and readiness to fight, often avoids an actual conflict, is fully borne out by the transformation of Persian absolute Monarchy into "Mujlis" Government—without a single drop of blood, which is another remarkable instance of modern national achievement through the so-called constitutional methods of putting up a stern fight in the legislative bodies coupled with outside propaganda, education and agitation. Nobody dreamt at the time that the monarchy, supported by mad and fanatical orientals, would so tamely submit to the changed conditions, and everyone expected a violent

TURKISH EXPERIMENT

counter revolution to restore the old order, but experience had proved that changes achieved through these peaceful and apparently legal methods are sometimes as stable and permanent as those achieved through violence

But the world has not yet furnished an example where complete transformation is achieved and the national goal is reached, by purely legal or constitutional methods alone, without recourse to or preparation for direct action, if necessary. We have not yet come across an instance, either in modern or ancient history, where a king or ruler, or even vested interests, have abdicated their position, simply because an assembly or council, representing public opinion, has by a majority vote, passed a resolution and made persistent demands for a change in the existing order. There must be some effective sanction, backed by preparations and readiness for direct action, behind these demands to make them effective and forceful, whether it be the Tsar of Russia or the Shah of Persia, the Khalifa in Turkey or the "White Moghul" in India, they will only submit to the inevitable, and hold on to the last, as long as they safely and conveniently can to believe otherwise would be against human nature. But to bring about that inevitable situation, and to make the strangulation complete, all modern upheavals show that both legal and illegal means and methods are necessary, and councils and assemblies, howsoever constituted, have played an important part in the violent or non-violent warfare. As to the different strategies and tactics employed by different nations according to the requirements of the existing circumstances, we have dealt with them in a subsequent chapter on "Compromise and Surrender"

BOOK I

One example will suffice to show how the British diplomacy managed to keep its high "reputation," and succeeded in completely throwing overboard the rest of the Powers in Europe. So far back as in 1882, the other European Powers became rather uneasy about the British attitude and movements in Egypt, apprehending that under the usual pretext of offering protection to vested, commercial and financial interest, they would ultimately become the sole occupier of Egypt and thus shut off the Gate to the East for the rest of Europe. The master of Egypt would be the master of Far Eastern possessions, and so the European Powers bestirred themselves and compelled the British by means of a combined action to call a conference and come to some definite arrangement to protect their interests.

A conference of all the powers, France, England, Italy, Germany, Austria and Russia,—met at Constantinople in June 1882, and a convention was solemnly entered into and signed by all the powers assembled, including England, all undertaking "not to seek any territorial advantage, nor any concession of exclusive privilege, nor any commercial advantage for their subjects other than those which any other nation can equally obtain." It was further agreed somewhat on the lines of nine power agreement in China later on, that none of the powers should take any isolated action in Egypt. But as this final course meant a great handicap for the British and threatened to upset all their plans, British shrewdness and diplomacy rose to the occasion, and in order to save themselves from the impending disaster of being deprived of such a valuable spoil, the British had a proviso added to the last clause, viz, "that isolated action" should be permitted to them only in the case of special

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

emergency" This was a master-stroke that ultimately secured British success, because as usual it was left vague as to who should decide whether a special emergency of such a nature had arisen or not

It is most surprising that the Sultan of Turkey, who was the sovereign head of the state above Khediv, allowed this effrontery and brazen-facedness to continue, thus proving the impotency of the Sultanate at that period

It was not long before the British took advantage of this last diplomatic proviso, barely one month after the signing of this solemn protocol, signed and attested by all the important powers in Europe, on 11th July 1882, British gunboats were seen bombarding Alexandria, and shortly after, British troops landed, and there was practically military occupation of important centres in less than three months after the solemn agreement Under the same agreement, the right to restore internal order and *status quo* was given to the Sultan of Turkey But the British only wanted to break the convention forced upon them, by bringing moral pressure on other powers, and they had not even the decency to wait for a reasonable time to evade suspicion The Egyptians, feeling that as a result of this treaty they were at last freed from foreign encroachment, had begun to restore order, and as a first step, started repairing old forts and other properties that were dilapidated or damaged by recent disturbances That circumstance was a sufficient excuse, and according to them a "special emergency" as mentioned in the provision, at their own dictation, had arisen to justify the most drastic and ruthless action of a naval bombardment and forcible military occupation If such an outrageous and flagrant breach had been committed in respect of

BOOK I

any European State, howsoever small and insignificant, there is no doubt that it would have resulted in a declaration of war against England, but as it had happened with regard to an oriental country, the other powers, who were parties to the treaty and guarantors of integrity, did not think it worth their while to proceed in the matter and tamely pocketed the British affront. They accepted the British occupation as an accomplished fact, perhaps with a secret promise of a share in the future spoil (Defeat of Arbi Pasha at Tel-el-Kebier 13th September 1882).

Does this not again read like one of the many and usual incidents in the history of British occupation of India? Does this not remind us of the biting criticism of that great Englishman, Edmand Burke uttered a century before this disgraceful episode in connection with British deals in India? Speaking on Fox's India Bill in 1783, he said —

" First I say that there is not a single Prince, State or Potentate in India, great or small, whom they have not sold, Secondly, not a single treaty which they have not broken thirdly not a single Prince or State, whosoever put any trust in Company, who is not utterly ruined "

Such is the verdict of one of the greatest British statesmen and orators, uttered long before the real record of British achievements commenced. This Egyptian episode is one more instance which proves the similarity of mentality and temperament that prompted the British in their dealings with both these unfortunate oriental countries.

As in India upto recently, the British enjoyed the privilege of special tribunals in Egypt. In 1906, a notorious trial known as "Denshavatie trial" took place in

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

Egypt under a special tribunal, and a more infamous example of British atrocity in the name of "Law and Order" and Justice could hardly be found even in India. We will reproduce the account of this disgraceful episode as described by a member of the British Labour Party, Mr E Burns. He states —

" In 1906, a party of British officers, who were pigeon-shooting in the village of Denshavatie (in Egypt) set fire to a threshing floor and injured a peasant woman. They were attacked by the villagers with sticks and one of them was struck on head. It was agreed by the officers that this man should go to the Camp, five miles away, for assistance. On the way he got sun-stroke and died. The medical evidence at the trial showed decisively that sun-stroke was the immediate cause of death. Yet for this affair the tribunal sentenced four of the villagers to be hanged, seven to be flogged and twelve to terms of imprisonment varying from one year to penal servitude for life. The tribunal further insisted that the sentences of hanging and flogging should be carried out publicly in the presence of villagers. British troops and Egyptian police were brought to the village and the family members of the accused men were compelled to witness the execution.

" The British Official in charge telegraphed a report to Sir Edward Grey with the following comments — "I consider that the arrangements were admirable and reflect great credit on all concerned". (Egypt No 3 of 1906)

" This final act of the Baring regime roused a widespread hatred of British oppression in Egypt and led to the revival of an active nationalism for the first time since the suppression of the Arabi movement."

BOOK I

It is only necessary to refer to one or two incidents of this description to show the similarity of the problems to be dealt with by Indian and Egyptian nationalists. This tragic episode reads like the butchery of Jhalianwalla Bagh, though on a much smaller scale, and atrocities and oppression of such a description led to the growth of popular resentment and active nationalism in both the countries.

Another curious and strange coincidence is also reported by the same author. At a critical juncture in the Egyptian history, when the question of special measures by the British for protection of minorities, particularly Christians, was uppermost, a riot occurred in Alexandria where many Christians were killed. Mr Burns, reporting on this subject, states

"It was in this situation that a massacre of Christians at Alexandria was secretly organised. The massacre was carried out by a hired band of Bedouins, and the police had instructions not to interfere, while it was arranged that the Commandant of Garrison should not be informed until some hours after the riot had occurred (Egypt No 4, 1884). This manoeuvre, however, was not altogether a success from the British point of view. It produced a demand from the European residents for a withdrawal of provocative forces, recognition of national leaders (Arabi), and setting up of a joint conference of all powers (referred to above)."

Is it not rather strange that similar communal troubles should arise in India also at critical stages of national crisis? Such co-incidences make the history of Egypt all the more important for Indian Nationalists to understand and study, so as to form a sort of a guide to

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

them in the solution of similar problems in India. Though Egypt was a Protectorate and India is a British possession, constitutionally and legally these two positions ought to indicate two fundamentally different policies and treatment, still in practice the attitude and control were the same, only they were exercised through different media and by slightly different methods and measures. The "guiding spirit" and the "ministering angel" were the same, Westminster or White Hall. It was necessary in the case of India to have a pliant and submissive Viceroy in the one case as a puppet and docile Khediv in the other, enjoying as much "independence" as the "ornamental" heads of Indian States. A refractory and self-assertive Viceroy like Lord Ripon or Minto could be recalled just as a pro-Turkish and independent Khediv Abbas could be deposed and pro-British and more accommodating Hussein can be enthralled in his place, with a more dignified title of "Sultan". The only difference was that with regard to India directions from White-Hall and Westminster were issued in a more mandatory and assertive tone, whereas in Egypt, being a Protectorate, the British could only "recommend", "advise" or "suggest" through their agent, the High Commissioner, and they were so much convinced of the wisdom of these advises and suggestions, that out of over-flowing solicitude for the welfare of the Egyptians themselves, British gunboats and warships were always ready to enforce the acceptance of these recommendations on the well-established plea, that where arguments and persuasions fail, the bullets and bombs are bound to prevail. Thus these militant arguments were used on several occasions, even in such internal affairs as acceptance or rejection of a ministry, or to even enforce

BOOK I

onvictions or acquittals of political agitators according to the pro or anti-British activities.

According to the idea of the British, all orientals are made of clay without any human touch or artistry, and the employment of force is the only effective policy to control and suppress the rising nationalism. Thus, in spite of all declarations and pledges given to the whole of Europe, and to Egypt and Turkey in 1882, under most flimsy and transparent prettexts the British occupation was almost complete. Gladstone in vain protested in 1882, in the following terms

"It would be absolutely at variance with all the principles and views of H M's Government and the pledges they have given to Europe"

But European opposition was gradually bought over by promising different slices from the "looted" lands in Africa and other Eastern territories. France was allowed a free hand in Morocco, and Italy and Germany were similarly silenced with some crumbs in other parts, as if the whole Earth, and particularly the Eastern Hemisphere was a huge ancestral estate of the European States, with the British as the eldest member, distributing the family shares amongst various members to avoid internal litigation and warfare. In their eyes, the Eastern races and nations do not count, they go as inalienable encumbrances with the estates.

Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary in Asquith's Government, adopted the same pose and arguments in respect of Egypt, "It is the policy of H M's Government to maintain our occupation of Egypt, because we cannot abandon, without disgrace, our responsibilities which have grown up around us there,"—great responsibilities

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

and trusts indeed with Asquith's son as Director of several Egyptian trusts and corporations, and Sir Edward Grey and scores of other Britishers having large amounts of shares and investments in other colonial enterprises and undertakings

Hon A M Asquith, son of Mr Asquith, Prime Minister, was the principal director of Soudan Plantation Syndicate and chief organiser of "Geiza Cotton District," a corporation most favoured and patronised by Soudan Government, with large tracts, of fertile lands and all other facilities. Hence it was necessary that Soudan must be separated from Egypt and kept directly under British Parliament. The same Swan-song was repeated by Mr MacDonald as Foreign and Prime Minister in 1924 during negotiations with Zaghlul, viz that they regarded their responsibilities as a trust for Soudan people and that there was no question of abandoning that trust and responsibility. Thus, whether Labour or Conservative party is in power, whether Asquith, Grey, MacDonald or Lloyd George was at the head of the government, so far as Eastern territories and people are concerned, it is the same hypocrisy, the same transparently dishonest plea, the same language or declaration, policy, method or measure to be found in their dealings with the subordinate countries, because the whole nation and race is inspired by the same motive of exploitation and self-aggrandisement.

It is therefore natural that the counter-attacks against this encroaching Imperialism, i.e the rising and growing Nationalism of subject races in the East, should also have some common basis, common policy and similar methods though differing in details and particulars, according to

different conditions and circumstances. Hence at such a critical juncture, when we are passing through somewhat similar phase in the political struggle, Egyptian events would both be instructive and interesting for Indian Nationalists. There was the "Wafd" party in Egypt corresponding to the Congress party in India, Zaghlul Pasha, its acknowledged head just as Mahatma Gandhi here, was the guide, philosopher and friend of the Party and country. The excesses of local bureaucrats and flagrant breaches of pledges by foreign diplomats, gradually transformed Zaghlul into an extremist, and the psychological phenomenon is the same in both the personalities. Zaghlul was a moderate, a co-operator like the Mahatma, even in the service of the Egyptian government holding a responsible position of a judge, but he was driven, like the Mahatma, to the opposite extreme, gradually losing faith in British Justice and promises, till ultimately he was forced by circumstances to rely more upon "direct action" than constitutional methods. But Zaghlul was not the first person to awaken the national conscience of Egypt. Long before him, at the initiative stage of foreign encroachment, one Arbi Pasha, a young and intrepid military officer had led the revolt, resulting in assassination of the British Finance Minister and suspension of British control for a short period. In 1882, the first British military occupation took place.

In 1914, Egypt was declared to be a British Protectorate. The "Wafd" party gradually grew in power and put up a strong opposition to government. Its aims and objects were to free Egypt entirely from British control and establish self-government on democratic lines, with the Khediv or Sultan as a constitutional monarch independent and free from foreign trammels.

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

Thus there was not much difference between the aims and objects of both the organisation—the “Wafd” and Congress. But the creed and policy of the Wafd Party was not limited to non-violence as in India. From time to time petty reforms were granted to appease the extremists. Just as in India, the high Commissioner though apparently an adviser, in reality, wielded all the powers through the accommodating and docile ‘Sultan’.

In 1913 a legislative Assembly was set up on lines somewhat similar to Morley-Minto reforms in India, with a limited franchise,—property qualification of £50 a year land-tax or house-rent of £20 a year. But it is important to note that the Wafd Party and Zaghlul decided to enter even this legislative body and capture it with a view to carry on agitation for further rights, both within and without. Zaghlul became the Vice-President of this body, and as a result of the attitude adopted by the party, led by Zaghlul, the Assembly had to be suspended.

Just as in India, efforts were made to set up a party of Moderates and Liberals, packed with aristocrats and landlords and led by Adly Pasha, to counteract the extremists. But as in India, that party had no following, and daily the power of Zaghlulists and Wafd party was growing and their agitation and unrest increased, in 1914, as a result of the “Wafd” Party capturing the Assembly and adopting uncompromising attitude, the Assembly had to be suspended, as they were not able to continue the farce and show, with the help of Moderates and Liberals as in India.

It was proposed to send a delegation to England to put forward Egypt's claim for Independence, consisting of Rashid (Moderate) and Zaghlul, but this offer was

BOOK I

refused. As the agitation and unrest had increased, Martial Law was substituted for ordinary rule in 1914, as in the Punjab in 1919. At last finding that it was not possible to suppress the movement without removing Zaghlul and his associates from the scene, he and his three associates were deported to Malta in March 1919, just as Mahatma Gandhi was convicted and sentenced to six years' imprisonment in the year 1922.

About this time there was the same bombastic talk in Egypt as we have been hearing in India, of the firm determination of British authorities, both local and at home, to crush the Wafd Party once for all, and thus rid the country of the extremists, so as to clear the road for exploitation. With that object, as a first step towards the process of crushing the movement, Zaghlul and his colleagues were removed, believing that the nationalist spirit in the country would automatically evaporate as soon as the leaders were incarcerated,—the same delusion from which our local bureaucrats suffer, but with the only difference, that in Egypt the disillusionment came very soon. Instead of the Egyptian nationalist spirit being crushed and peace restored, the news of these arrests spread like wild-fire, and within two or three days set the whole country on fire, literally burning with excitement and resentment, which resulted in open revolt throughout the country. Public properties, including railways and telegraphs, were destroyed and general strikes were declared all over the country. Almost the whole of the Egyptian Civil Service joined the strike, and schools, colleges and law courts were emptied. For the first time Egyptian ladies left their purdahs and openly joined the demonstrations. A party of British officers and

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

soldiers travelling in a train was fatally attacked. Lives and property of foreigners were insecure. That was the result of an attempt to crush the nationalist spirit by oppression and tyranny, and far from the movement being crushed, it received such tremendous impetus and force that it was found impossible to carry on the normal administration. Considering discretion as better part of valour, the arrogant bureaucrats were for once compelled to set aside consideration of prestige, and in spite of the defiant and threatening declarations of crushing the Wafd party, they had to yield to popular outburst, and within a few days of their deportation, Zaghlul and his colleagues had to be recalled and other oppressive measures had to be cancelled.

Though they submitted to the inevitable for the time being and meekly pocketed the humiliation and loss of prestige, still they were not slow in wreaking revenge. Shortly after the restoration of comparative peace and calm, as a result of the restoration of freedom to the leaders, the British Bull-dog began to show his teeth. Instead of accepting the situation with good grace so as to make it appear as a gesture of generosity and sympathy, they started a reign of terror for some days under the same plea of "Law and Order", and indulged in atrocities and brutalities that would equal another similar disgraceful episode in India about the same time, the tyranny of Punjab Martial Law regime and butchery of Jhalianwalla Bagh. Peaceful demonstrators were massacred, bombs were thrown on villages, and villages were wiped out. A large number of persons was either executed or transported for life, totalling about a thousand. All these frightful and terrorist methods, which the

BOOK I

Punjab had experienced about the same period and which India shall never forget, were practised. By a remarkable coincidence, political events in India and Egypt were not only parallel, as if one set of bureaucrats got an inspiration from their brother autocrats in the East, but curiously enough, the causes of the eruptions were more or less the same. The rumoured arrest of Mahatma Gandhi led to the conflagration in India, just as the deportation of Zaghlul and his colleagues resulted in spontaneous upheavals in Egypt, and in both the cases the official mind was impelled by the same motive. Two kinds of losses are unnumberable to the Britishers, particularly in the East,—the loss of prestige to the official and the loss of profits to the merchants. Both these losses, whenever they occur, must be recouped by any means, even by autocratic brutality or mercantile fraud. It matters not even if in the very process of this recovery, the official loses all his reputation for justice and fairplay or the merchant his fair name for honesty. The orientals must be taught a lesson at all costs, otherwise the very foundation of the Eastern Empire that is based on brute force, would automatically collapse. Such is the logic and short-sighted policy of Dyerian mentality.

Now we will proceed from this dark episode to a little brighter prospect. First a mailed fist was shown resulting in irreparable disaster, then a silken-glove was put on to cover the mailed fist—a faint and belated effort to repair that disaster, after inflicting terrible and almost incurable wounds.

A mission of political quacks that usually aggravates the situation instead of alleviating it by adding more insult to the injury, was despatched to Egypt. Before even

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

the blood-stains of national martyrs were removed from the Father-land, the Milner Commission arrived in Egypt in May 1919 to soil the land recently made sacred by the immense sacrifice and suffering

The more we proceed with the progress of political events in Egypt, the greater resemblance do we notice in the onward march of both the countries, India and Egypt. When we read of the pathetic progress of the melancholy Milner Mission throughout the country, we are reminded of the similar farce of the Simon Show, more recently enacted in this land. In both the places the apparent motive was the same, viz to appease the moderate and sober section of the people by throwing some crumbs here and there, thus causing a division in the camp. It must be remembered that just as India had her Chimanlals and Saprus, so also Egypt was inflicted with Adly Pasha, Ziver Beg and scores of others.

Nevertheless, the boycott of Milner Commission in Egypt was as complete as that of Simon Commission in India. Wherever the Milner Commission went, there was universal strike of schools and colleges, transport and other public utility services, and even law courts were emptied. Not finding anybody to come forward to give evidence officially, to save their faces, as in India some semi-social functions were arranged for them in order to have private talks with so-called leaders of "public opinion." The Commission proved a miserable fiasco, and on its return to England, its members had greater frankness than the Simonites to publicly admit their failure.

BOOK I

The Mission failed, as in India, either to create any substantial division in the ranks, or to appease even the sober element in the country. On the contrary, as in this country, it resulted in a better consolidation of the nationalists' position

The events that followed Milner Commission in Egypt, between 1919 and 1924 till the new constitution came into force, become all the more interesting at the present stage, because India is practically still passing through that phase to-day in 1930-1934. The Milner Report, as was expected, was not acceptable to anybody in that country, and a fresh dose of repression followed, with the declaration of Martial Law, prosecution and convictions to long terms of imprisonment and infliction of heavy fines. Zaghlul, who was on the Continent carrying on propaganda in France, was summoned to England to discuss the situation and find a way out of the impasse, just as Mahatma Gandhi was persuaded to join the delegation. There was no formal conference like the Round Table Conference, but private discussions were carried on with delegates. There was a group of Egyptians who advised surrender, but Zaghlul and his party remained firm. At last, finding him refractory and unyielding, he was again arrested on his return to Egypt and was deported to Ceylon. That was in December 1921, on Christmas Eve, just as Gandhi received a New Year's invitation in 1932. Demonstrations all over the country were again held, followed by strikes and several acts of violence and frantic efforts on the part of the authorities to suppress the Wafd party, similar to the attempts made in India to crush the Congress. All leaders were imprisoned, and fines up to £5,000 were imposed, which is

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

larger than the highest figure of 20/30 thousand rupees reached in India

Finding the position getting much worse after the vigorous efforts made to crush the movement, and having completely failed in their object, Allenby, the High Commissioner, had at last to yield and advise a policy of reconciliation. He strongly suggested immediate issue of a Declaration from British Cabinet promising internal independence with certain safeguards and separation of Soudan. In 1922 he sent home a despatch advocating "either the annexation of a violently hostile country which would require to be governed by force, or else complete capitulation on the part of His Majesty's Government. We have been used to expect the World to admire our work in Egypt. I can imagine no more deplorable end to it". He hoped that as a result of such a declaration there would be a split in the Wafd Party and a substantial group will be ready to work the constitution. Accordingly, on 28th February 1922, about two and a half months after Zaghlul's arrest, a Declaration was issued by the British Cabinet promising independence in internal affairs, but reserving certain points to the direction of British Government till agreement is reached. This was protection of foreigners and defence against foreign aggression, which would mean a foreign army of occupation, security of communication (Suez Canal) and the separation of Soudan.

About a year after the declaration, a constitution was framed on these lines, and it was after the constitution was passed in an Act in April 1923 that Zaghlul and all the members of the Wafd Party interned as political

BOOK I

prisoners were released after undergoing about 18 months' imprisonment. This is just the phase through which India is passing from 1929 to 1933. The process is the same, viz Gandhi's attendance at the 2nd Round Table Conference in England in 1931, non-acceptance of the terms by him, his return and immediate incarceration, and enactment of ordinances, as bad as the Martial Law, further declaration of policy and hurrying through the constitution.

What next? "To enter or not to enter" the legislative body was the problem that confronted the Wafd Party and the country in 1923-24 after the passing of the new constitution and the release of political prisoners. As Indian National Congress is faced with exactly the same problem, the course adopted by the Wafd Party and Zaghlul at the supreme crisis becomes an interesting and instructive guide for our guidance and consideration.

Zaghlul's and his Wafd Party's oft declared goal was complete independence, more real than the "Substance of Independence" aspired by the Congress. No doubt the constitution that was offered to Egypt was at least apparently a complete internal autonomy with indirect adult franchise, the electorate college consisting of delegates chosen by a group of adults (21 years). There was no attempt at making different compartments or groups, separate electorate or reservation. In a way the franchise was more liberal than one recommended in the Lothian Committee's report, but it must be admitted that Egyptian problem of franchise was less complicated than Indian. Though it was a great advance on the situation that existed before the granting of the constitution still it fell far short of the goal of complete

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

Independence for which the Wafd Party was struggling for years, and had made immense sacrifices and had undergone terrible hardships and sufferings

The main objections to the new reforms was the separation of Soudan, the foreign army of occupation for defence and protection of foreigners, which provision reduced the whole scheme to a sham independence Soudan was admittedly a part of Egypt, a very rich and fertile part, watered by the Nile The question was much more important than that of separation of Burma from India Egypt being a territory under a supposed independent Sultan, the idea of foreign army of occupation for defence was intolerable Again, it has been the acknowledged right of all rulers to protect or deal with foreigners residing in the land To admit the right of foreigners to interfere would be denial of independence and self-rule The public debt, incurred in more or less similar circumstances as in India, which amounted to £ 91 millions, draining off nearly £ 4 millions annually by way of interest, was another knotty question In spite of all these serious drawbacks and defects in the constitution, in spite of its falling short of the goal of Independence, the Wafd Party, under the leadership of Zaghlul, after due deliberation and long discussions, decided to enter the Councils in right earnest and assumed the responsibility of the future administration as the strongest and the most popular political party in the country The result of the first election to the legislative body in January 1924, showed the real strength of the party, even without a direct adult franchise The Liberals and Moderates were completely routed In a House of 214 elected members, 176 were Zaghlulists, and for this gratifying result Zaghlulists had to thank the previous government

BOOK I

because it was their policy of ruthless repression and their futile attempts to crush the Party that had created a reaction in favour of Zaghlulists and considerably increased their strength and power

Thus, from the beginning of 1924, Zaghlulist government began to function, and the Egyptian National struggle entered a new phase. From the vantage ground, they launched attacks from within and without and continued their struggle to achieve the original goal of the Wafd Party

Now let us examine the pros and cons on this question of council-entry as were considered by the Egyptian Nationalists and Zaghlulists

It must be admitted that the item of boycott of councils or legislatures had hardly entered the Nationalists' programme, and they have always considered it more advisable, like Lenin and Bolsheviks, to avail themselves of both the means, legal as well as illegal. Even in 1911-12 when legislative assemblies were more farcical than the Indian shows, Zaghlul had not only contested elections but had accepted the position of Vice-President, not only they entered and participated in the functions, but offered co-operation to the fullest extent, such as joining delegation of other parties, conferring with British Cabinet or local authorities, etc. When the position became intolerable and it was impossible to offer co-operation, consistent with national self-respect and honour, they would rather create a dead-lock, by compelling complete suspension of these bodies and thus preventing these institutions being exploited, either by foreign bureaucracy or local oligarchy of

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

self-seekers, than boycott them altogether. Such a deadlock was twice created,—once shortly after the War when the new Assembly, only after one session, had to be suspended for an indefinite period, and again in July 1928 when the British attempt to set up a loyalists' cabinet as against the nationalists' was foiled by bringing about a crisis and compelling suspension of parliament again for three years. These silent protests were certainly much more effective in exposing British Imperialists' tactics and created a wider publicity and stronger public opinion all over the world, than the most violent speeches or most ferocious resolutions in parliaments. But the Egyptian Nationalists were able to achieve these results on account of their consolidated and strong position, and a large majority which they commanded both in the Assembly and the country, unhampered by different communal groups as in India.

The Egyptians maintain that their hold on the masses and the commanding position enjoyed by them was to a considerable extent due to their wielding power, both as members of government and legislatures of the State. This also accounted for the gradual overthrow and diminishing power of the other rival parties mostly set up by British Imperialism to counteract the national movement. Again as members of government, the Zaghlulists were also able to maintain a better position amongst the international people in Europe, and were able to check to a considerable extent British exploitation by encouraging and developing indigenous industries and favourable tariffs through the parliament. These were some of the considerations that induced them to adopt whole-heartedly, the policy of working the constitution

though it fell far short of their goal, and as usual, was beset with snares and pitfalls in the dignified name of safeguard and securities

But it must also be considered that the political situation in Egypt was in many respects different from that in India. Egyptian Nationalists were free from communal canker and cast and sect fanaticism. The comparatively limited area and population were factors that by themselves went to consolidate and co-ordinate their position, and the communal question, on a very small scale, was solved very satisfactorily in a short time. Kopts, who belonged to a Christian community and were in a fairly large number, were at the beginning sought to be exploited by vested interests and foreign Imperialists, but luckily, both for them and the Nationalists, that minority exercised remarkable foresight and patriotism, and definitely refused to be made tools in interested hands. They threw in their lot wholeheartedly with Nationalists and refused with cold thanks the approaches of doubtful benefactors to save them from the supposed impending danger and ruination. They rejected all offers of a special treatment or favoured position. They freely took part in nationalists demonstrations, and it was a common sight to see large numbers of these Christians participating in processions and meetings, and even at times led and headed by their priests. The Zaghlulists most generously responded to this friendly and patriotic gesture, with the result that in Zaghlulists' regime the minority community occupied a position of safety and security, at the same time retaining the goodwill and friendship, that no amount of special legislation or statutory safeguards, could have secured for them.

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

Will not the major and minor communities in India and all parties, politicians and statesmen profit, by this most gratifying and instructive example set by the more far-sighted and patriotic people of Egypt ?

Another great advantage that the Egyptians enjoyed over the Indian Nationalists was that luckily their country was not infested with that bloc of great props of British Imperialism,—the loyalist Indian States, the great allies and true friends of the British Crown, playing a strangely double role, themselves being the victims of the Political Department and at the same time bossing or victimising their own state-subjects. The rulers of the Indian States, combined in one and the same person, different contradictory positions, the prisoner and the jailor, the judge and the accused, the ruler and ruled, Such a human phenomenon, is only possible in India. They cannot survive either in Egyptian or any other soil in East or West. The Egyptian aristocrats, landlords and capitalists, parading under false colours and styling themselves as "Pashas," very often attempted to play the role of miniature "Rajahs", "Maharajahs" or, "Nowabs", but they dared not go to the same length that some of the Maharajahs in India venture

Such extraordinary and peculiar phenomena, that are only possible in this country, are nevertheless factors to be reckoned with, whilst comparing Indian Nationalists' movement with that of any other country in the world, and a student of Indian polity should always bear these special factors in mind whilst making comparisons and drawing conclusions from nationalist movement of other countries

By a strange and extraordinary coincidence, particularly in recent times, whenever there has been a

BOOK I

transfer of autonomy and political power to a colony, protectorate or possession in the British Empire, a large and important tract of the country is always sliced off from the rest and excluded from the new self-rule of the country. It is kept more under direct control of the British Cabinet. This coincidence always results in either political or commercial advantage to England, and enables her to continue the hold, though indirectly and on a smaller scale, on the country or colony, even after the supposed emancipation. Thus in 1921-22, when by a treaty, Ireland was made a Free State and was given a separate National Parliament, the important province of Ulster in the North was excluded from that arrangement, and that province with a separate administration is still directly under the British Parliament. This has naturally resulted in considerably weakening the new National Regime in Ireland, and at the same time indirectly, continuing the hold of British Parliament over a large area, even after the supposed emancipation. All endeavours to remove this anomaly and to bring about a union has been successfully resisted.

Similarly in 1923, when the new constitution was created for Egypt and she was given a separate parliament the most fertile tract, full of mineral and agricultural wealth, was separated and Soudan is still directly administered by the British. It has been a continuous source of conflict and friction between the Egyptian Nationalists and the British, and one of the first steps, after Zaghlul came into power, was to take up the question. The Egyptians were naturally more keen on this subject, than any other reserved points. In the meantime, the Labour Government having come into power, a new hope

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

was inspired in the minds of Egyptians, because, like deluded Indians, they too were carried away by high sounding platitudes, declarations and pledges of that hypocritical party. One of their swan-songs was the right of self-determination, particularly for the minor states and communities, and the Great war was supposed to have been fought to preserve this sacred right. There was not the least doubt that the Soudanese themselves also demanded the same treatment as the rest of Egypt and the only reason for this discrimination and exception was that self-determination would deprive the British exploiters of the opportunity, facilities and special privileges they hitherto enjoyed. The relatives and friends of Cabinet Ministers would not enjoy the same concessions with regard to grant of land and supply of forced cheap labour if the control was transferred to Egyptian Parliament.

One of the first declarations of Labour Government, after it came into power, was to make it clear that giving up Soudan would be a breach of sacred trust and that, government had a grave responsibility towards the people, the same jargon, breathing of dishonesty and hypocrisy, as is heard about India and other possessions. Zaghul gave the spirited reply, that there was nothing new in the declaration, they had been accustomed to hear it from British Ministers. However, what is surprising is that it should come from the Labour Government, who upto recently, as members of the opposition were never tired of making false promises, giving false pledges and always sermonising on the rights of Egypt and Soudan to self-determination and self-rule. The Egyptians were thoroughly disillusioned, and

BOOK I

like the Indian Nationalists, the Zaghlulists were convinced that in their dealings with the East and Asiatic races, Great Britain had one single consolidated party, though for Dominions and other international purposes there may be different party labels. For India or Egypt, Africa or China, they are all united and formed a solid bloc, whose oral declarations, or even written pledges, could not be relied upon.

The result of this loss in British faith and futility of constitutional methods was the same in both the countries, India and Egypt. A section of more impatient and over-enthusiastic youths was drifting towards other channels to give vent to their pent-up and outraged feelings, and seek redress by more violent and dangerous methods. They knew that all this tall talk of trust and responsibility was British bunkum. They had not the frankness and honesty to admit that Soudanese Cotton was world-famous and its value to Britain had enhanced since the American war of Independence that deprived Great Britain of one of the best sources of raw products. It was also rich in minerals and other pastoral growth. Hence, in the happy family arrangement and the distribution of the "Ancestral" property, the richest and the best slice went to the most powerful, the most selfish and the most greedy brother, Great Britain. Italy had to be content with Abyssinia, Germany with East Africa and France with Morocco, thus giving effect to the policy of self-determination between themselves without even consulting the interests of natives, the children of the soil. It is no wonder that some hot-headed youths put a different construction on the usual method of self-determination, and they looked upon it more as self-aggrandisement.

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

The trend of events that led to the formation and growth of anarchist party was more or less the same in both the countries. In November 1924, Sir Lee Stack, Governor-General of Soudan was shot dead in Cairo. Then followed again the iron rule of repression and once again a desperate attempt was made to suppress the Wafd Party. The parliament was dissolved, Zaghlul was made to resign and once again they reverted to the old method of suspending the new constitution that had hardly functioned for a few months. A nominated ministry governed the country, with one Ziver Pasha, a notorious pro Britisher at its head, and with a view to oust the Wafd Party the new Election Law (with universal adult franchise) was suspended and the old law with property qualification was introduced. About a thousand prominent Wafdists were kept in custody. In spite of all that, Zaghlul decided to contest fresh election, and again, in spite of all these drawbacks and handicaps, he secured a majority, thus making it impossible for Ziver Ministry to function through parliament. The Ziver Ministry was compelled to resign, and rather than hand over power to Zaghlulists as majority party, King Faud, at the British dictation, again dissolved the parliament. This outrage on a constitution so recently promulgated, was strongly resented not only by the Zaghlulists but by all the political parties in Egypt, which resulted in a united protest to the King by Zaghlulists, Nationalists, Constitutionalists and Liberals. This agitation compelled the British and their puppet, the King, to yield, and they were once again forced to open negotiations with Zaghlul. This resulted in restoration of the constitution, and the fresh election, under the new adult franchise rules, resulted once again in returning the Zaghlulists in a large

BOOK I

majority, 142 in a House of about 200 members* At this stage an atrocious outrage was committed by the British that added one more dark spot to their already tarred record, and which made the name of that ex-Governor of Bombay, Baron Lloyd of Back-Bay fame, notorious in the East

In the ordinary course, Zaghlul, as the acknowledged leader of the majority party, should have been called upon to form a ministry But Baron Lloyd, who was then the High Commissioner, representing the most constitutional and "freedom-loving" race, whose government had undertaken not to interfere in internal affairs, raised a strong objection to Zaghlul forming a cabinet, and not having any legal argument to advance such a preposterous plea, he backed his demand by the usual British argument, viz British military and naval force, and ordered the British battleship "Resolute" to take possession of the Egyptian harbour and made all preparations for a forced military occupation Can we imagine a greater outrage on public liberty, a flagrant breach of faith and treaty than this outrageous and arrogant military and naval encroachment, only two years after a solemn treaty granting Egypt complete independence so far as internal affairs were concerned? It was a military rebellion against a constitution set up and granted by them shortly before, after due deliberation and discussion in conference, and duly and solemnly signed in the form of a treaty and convention This breach of faith was even more condemnable than the 1882 outrage when a signed convention with all the European powers was broken a month after its execution

* May 1926.

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

There were only two alternatives before the Egyptian Nationalists, either to accept the arrogant challenge and declare war on Great Britain, or submit to this outrage. It was a moment of supreme crisis for the party. Egypt had only recently come into her own, and even during the period of two years, there was neither peace nor stable government to enable the nation to consolidate its position or develop her resources. Besides, both the army and the police were a tool in the hands of the British, so that it would not only mean a war with one of the most powerful and resourceful naval and military power in the world, but, with further complications, a civil strife within. In other words, it would mean a sure disaster to the country and a complete wiping out of a party, setting back the hand of progress, and undoing the work of several years. The right decision taken by Zaghlul at this critical juncture, considerably enhanced his reputation, both in his own country as well as abroad. He proved to be as great a diplomat and statesman as he had earned laurels as a great fighter. Looking more to the interest of his country rather than to his personal and party's prestige, he agreed to a compromise, whereby a middle course was adopted, both the parties, partly giving up their original position,—the British did not insist upon foisting the hated Ziver ministry on the people and Zaghlul giving up his constitutional right to Prime-Ministership, accepting a coalition cabinet with Adli Pasha, a Liberal, as Prime Minister. Thus the object of the Zaghlulists was served. Commanding a majority in parliament, the real power remained with them, though nominally the Prime Minister was a Liberal. But the main object of the British was frustrated. Baron Lloyd had promised his die-hard friends in England that during

his regime he would get the Egyptians to accept the reservations that the British had imposed in the treaty, viz retention of Soudan under British control, garrisoning of British troops in Egyptian territory and special protection to foreigners. The Zaghlulists had all along resisted and protested against these provisos, and these subjects were still open, as the Egyptian Cabinet had not accepted them. Baron Lloyd had conspired with the King to take advantage of the upheaval following Lee Stack murder, to force a pliant ministry of Adli Pasha on the parliament, as that traitor had promised, if put in office, to get the reservations accepted. That conspiracy was foiled, because on the question of reservations almost all the parties in Egypt were united, and even Moderate Ministers like Adli or Sarwat dared not accept them, though both of them were well-inclined towards the British.

Having saved a most difficult situation by a master stroke of statesmanship and at the same time retained real power, though nominally not in office, undaunted by the recent happenings, Zaghlul and his unconquerable Wafd Party again entered on war-path. In 1927, taking advantage of this majority, they introduced measures that would ultimately lead to the removal of the obnoxious reservations and safe-guards. Zaghlul began with a measure for increasing and strengthening of the Egyptian army and abolition of the post of Sirdar (C-in-C) that was always held by an Englishman. Credit item for British Garrison was deleted from Egyptian Budget. The British saw that this was the beginning of a parliamentary campaign of preparation for constitutional warfare that would ultimately result in wiping out of all the reservations and result in the union of Egypt and Soudan. So their

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

interference and usual arguments again started, the usual threat of warships in the harbour, bluffing and bullying like John Bull

At the critical juncture, Zaghlul unfortunately died and was succeeded by an equally courageous intrepid leader, Nahas Pasha, who had gradually come into power as a minister. More battleships were ordered from Malta to Alexandria, attempting to force the objectionable treaty and demanding withdrawal of the new Bill. Nahas at first remained firm till a final ultimatum came that unless the Bill was dropped in three days, the battleships would be put into action. What reply could there be to this "bombing" argument? Nahas once more had to yield, the whole parliament strongly protesting against this constant breach of treaty and continuous interference with constitutional rights of parliament. But the parliament, whilst agreeing to postpone the Bill, firmly refused to be bullied by British battleships into signing the obnoxious treaty. There was a serious deadlock, and the only way out of the impasse was to get the parliament again suspended for three years, making use of the docile tool on the throne. In July 1928, King Faud issued a decree suspending the parliament for three years.

From this very brief survey of the series of facts in the Egyptian struggle for Independence nearly upto the point when the Indian struggle starts in right earnest, with the Declaration of Independence and ultimatum at the Calcutta Congress, a student of Indian politics can draw useful, instructive and important deductions and conclusions that may be of some help and guide to his own decision. The trend of events, as noted above, show

BOOK I

a remarkable similarity and sequence, displaying more or less the same mentality on both sides, official as well as national. It was the same motive of greed for power and pelf and the same desire not to part with power and vested interests that actuated both local bureaucrats and British Imperialists, to adopt shameful measures which no civilised nation of modern age could attempt to justify. There was the same mask of hypocrisy and lack of frankness that impelled them to assume a pose of trustees for the dumb millions, with grave responsibilities to discharge. Not having the same pretext to assume the role of protectors of minorities,—Muslims or Depressed Classes, as in India,—this most un-Christian race took up on itself the divine duty of protecting the Christian population and foreigners in the land. Though the population itself seeing through the game, declined this false offer with thanks, still they would insist upon being the custodians of their lives and properties, even against their will,—a self-imposed task and a self-styled denomination.

We have mentioned above one strange co-incidence common to at least three of the British possessions at the time of national regeneration, viz separation of an important and vital part of the land and causing a disruption, such as Soudan in Egypt, Ulster in Ireland and Burma in India. Another tragic feature accompanying this transitional phase is the intercommunal discord, suddenly breaking out at the most critical juncture in national history.

I am afraid that we have drifted a little from the original subject. The object of the present chapter is to bring out for the purpose of elucidation and comparison, points of contact and similarity between the Egyptian

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

and the Indian struggle for freedom. The little digression was necessary to emphasize the point when some incidents and peculiarities are not only common to Egypt and India, but also to all other parts of the Empire. Therefore we will revert to the point,—the lessons to be drawn by students of Indian politics from the Egyptian struggle.

We have already referred to some demonstrative political events in Egypt before the new constitution came into force in 1924, that would furnish illustrative examples and precedents for us. Here an attempt will be made to deal seriatim with some of the points and events after 1924 when Egypt is supposed to have enjoyed at least internal independence.

The first point that strikes even a perfunctory student is the fact that the real struggle for independence did not end with the settlement, but in a sense it entered a new phase since that date, a phase that was seriously beset with more difficulties and involving more important issues than before. It is important for us to make a careful note of this circumstance, because there are many amongst us who are at present labouring under a false sense of security and serenity, that the onerous task and the hardship, sacrifice and suffering will end as soon as the new constitution in India begins to function in 1935-36. The struggle in Egypt continued to wag, and as a matter of fact is still not ended, over the reservations, particularly on the question of Soudan and the army of occupation. Repression and persecution came not from the new government of Zaghlulists as in Ireland and other places, but the new government and the Wafd Party were victimised and persecuted by the same over-lords as before. Whereas before 1914 there were only ordinances,

edicts and decrees resulting in imprisonments, deportations and forfeitures, after the new constitution was inaugurated, the measures adopted were much more serious and drastic, and British warships and gunboats were summoned at least on three occasions in the course of three years with a threat to bombard Alexandria and use other coercive and violent methods

In 1925 and later, shortly after the new, parliament began to function, the parliament was dissolved, Zaghlul's ministry was removed, a pro-British super-loyalist, Adli Pasha, was nominated as minister, over 3000 persons belonging to the Wafd party were kept in custody for months without trial, the new franchise law (Zaghlulist law) of universal adult franchise was revoked and the old Franchise of property qualification was again enacted, -all these under the reserve powers of the king which correspond to the emergency powers of veto vested in the Viceroy The Tsar of Russia is killed, 'long live the new Tsars in Egypt and India' These new autocrats are the creation of the new democratic constitutions, specially evolved for the East and applicable to territories at and beyond Suez Canal

Judging from this Egyptian tragedy, there is no doubt that 1935 and the years following may mean peace and repose for the Moderates and Liberals of India, who will dream that they have reached their goal and the last resting place in politics, but to Congressmen who have pledged not to rest content till the real goal is reached there appear to be bright prospects of a renewed struggle no matter whatever policy they adopt This forewarning is necessary to prevent the youth from being deluded and beguiled into a false and dangerously misleading position.

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

For the Egyptian Wafd Party, for the Indian Congress, as also for our white comrades, the Irish Republicans, the Flag of Independence shall continue to fly aloft, till the final destination is reached and their boats are burnt, there can be no question of return to the shores. It is yet a long long way to "Swaraj"

That is Egyptian lesson No 1, more for the youth of the country to remember and carefully to note. Egyptian lesson No 2 should be noted by the Elders, particularly that supposed sober and moderate element in the country that goes to form the other political parties in India,—the Moderates, Liberals, Constitutionalists and even Communalists,—a very valuable and instructive lesson which, let us hope, our friends here will imbibe from their brethren-in-arms in the Eastern country of Egypt

The Wafdists in Egypt, like the Congress in India, formed the most important political party and organisation in the country with the largest following amongst the masses. Besides that principal party, as in India, there were a number of other parties, such as Nationalists, Liberals, Constitutionalists (Independents), Landholders, etc., composed of intelligentsia, professionals, capitalists and aristocrats. As the result of all the elections proved, numerically all the parties combined did not come up to one-fourth strength of the Wafdists. Naturally the British (with their Palace Hirelings) looked to these other groups in their efforts to crush the Zaghlulists, and to some extent there was a strong rivalry and even political hostility prevailing between the two, the Wafdists on one side as against the rest grouped together

It was the policy of British Cabinet, to get the country, through the instrumentality of these other parties, to accept the treaty as a whole, including the reservations about the occupation by military force, special rights to foreigners and separation of Soudan. The other parties, with a view to bring peace and avoid struggle, were prepared to yield, and would have yielded, but for the firm and resolute attitude of the Zaghlulists. Lord Lloyd, considered to be a strong man, was sent to Egypt with the object of enforcing the said policy, and by any means, fair or foul, to crush the Zaghlulists, put the Moderates or other parties in power, and thus get them to accept, through parliament, the treaty and also to retrieve the British Prestige, supposed to have been lost by 1919 surrender. Hence that autocrat made various frantic efforts to carry out this policy, first adhering to apparently legal and constitutional methods, letting loose on the Wafd Party the whole armoury of repression,—Martial Law,—for months together, and even tried the extraordinary experiment of revoking the liberal "adult" franchise system introduced in the new constitution by Zaghlul's party and reverting to the old restricted and limited franchise based on high property and other qualifications. He hoped thereby to diminish the strength of Zaghlulists and thus get through the terms of the treaty. When he found that in spite of all these extraordinary measures, he could not succeed and the Zaghlulists with all the drawbacks, handicaps, difficulties, hardships, sufferings and obstructions, continued to command a large majority, he became so desperate, and lost his head so completely at his repeated failures, that as a last resort, in his desperation, he adopted those diastic and rebellious measures of

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

enforcing a cabinet and ministry at the point of bayonet His object was to get the treaty accepted by the cabinet thus set up, and then revert to the normal state, because he knew that such abnormal condition could not last long Though he apparently succeeded by such disgraceful and scandalous methods, to oust Zaghlul and his successor from his rightful place and secured a cabinet more pliant and submissive to his views, still, be it said to the credit of the other moderate Egyptian parties, that even thus he failed to secure his nefarious object Instead of taking a mean advantage of the situation thus created for them and playing traitors to the country, though normally and under ordinary circumstances they were willing and ready to accept the treaty simply to end the struggle and trouble, still under the peculiar circumstances, they decided to make a united stand, and all parties, including Adli Yeghen, the new Minister set up, stood solidly with Zaghlul and his party, expressing strong resentment at such a grave outrage and refusing to be made tools by this wily British diplomat and autocrat Even Sarwat, all along a friend of British interests, for the time being became their opponent

Thus the British Bully found to his costs that he had overshot the mark and the British gunboats that he had summoned from Malta and Gibraltar at great costs, instead of blowing off the Zaghlulist Party, had ultimately blown off and cast to the wind his own schemes and plots Out of the whole affair the Zaghlulists in the long run, not only gained a great moral victory by preventing the passage of the treaty, but even gained greater strength, by making new allies and securing a political unity between rival parties All the parties showed a united front against the common enemy, and in a few days complete

BOOK I

political unity prevailed, that perhaps could not have been achieved by several years continuous efforts and propaganda. Thus crestfallen and defeated Lord Lloyd left the shores of Egypt, being recalled before his time just as he had left the shores of India a few years ago, a disgraced and discredited administrator, after having lowered his own as well as his country's reputation in the eyes of the world. That is the fate of all tyrants who do not know where to stop and always spoil the game, even from their autocratic standpoint, by overshooting the mark.

It would be too much to expect local bureaucrats to take a lesson from the Egyptian fiasco. They will learn nothing and forget nothing. But we have every reason to hope and right to expect that this most instructive, useful and illuminating lesson will not be entirely lost on our Moderate and Liberal friends in India. Instead of exulting over the apparent fall of a powerful political rival and attempting to profit by that supposed "fall", at a time of supreme crisis, when the country's honour and interest both demand united action, will they not make a gallant political stand like the Egyptian Liberals and Moderates, for the time being forgetting their political differences and bickerings, face arm-in-arm the common enemy and common danger, and thus save the country and the nation from the greedy and cruel clutches of foreign aggression? We may sympathise with our afflicted brethren in Egypt, but at the same time, claiming to be both rational and national, may we not profit by their experiences?

That the Indian politicians of moderate school of thoughts are capable of rising to the occasion, even

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

though temporarily and feebly, is proved by the united stand they made with Congress in boycotting the hated and unwanted Simon Commission. Could they have achieved the same victory or brought about any appreciable results, by their usual isolated, meek and timid measures of petitions or even strongly-worded protests? Their first and the only experiment of adopting the strong Congress method of boycott was undoubtedly a great success, and that encourages us to a belief, though distant and faint, that being faced with a situation as humiliating outrageous and scandalous as the Egyptians, they would act in the same gallant patriotic self-respecting and dignified way, as their Egyptian brethren of the same political colour and creed, and contemptuously refuse to be the tools and instruments in the hands of foreigners, in their attempts to set up one party against another, to gain their own selfish ends.

When we question the attitude of our Moderate and Liberal friends, we may also raise a similar question about the Congress and its leaders. The Egyptian episodes furnish illustrative and instructive lessons for all. First and foremost the position with regard to the legislatures and assemblies is reversed. Whilst, here apparent attempts are being made to induce the Congress Party to enter Councils and work the constitution for what it is worth, in Egypt, every endeavour was made to oust the Zaghlulists from the parliament, so as to have a smooth sailing with other more pliant and docile parties. Zaghlul and his party persistently refused to play into the hands of their enemy, and consequently, overcoming all obstacles and obstruction, even at times discretely pocketing what was intended to be an insult and humiliation, so that in a huff he should leave them alone, he

BOOK I

always succeeded throughout in capturing large majorities. In pre-reform days, when the ministry was nominated, they played the part of an important opposition party, and since the introduction of the new constitution, they assumed reins and responsibilities of government. Thus entrenched, in what they considered to be a position of power and advantage, they carried on the struggle both in and out of parliament, never budging an inch from the original position taken up by the party. The Egyptians maintain that this policy alone enabled the Wafd party for a considerable time to keep up the strength and hold on the masses of the country, so that in spite of the most ruthless and tyrannical attempts to crush it, it grew stronger and stronger and continued to be the only political factor to be reckoned with both by the local monarch and foreign diplomacy.

When the position in the parliament became intolerable and when the country's honour and interest demanded a policy of boycott, Zaghlul, by means of his majority, managed to have the doors of this farcical House completely closed, by compelling it either to be suspended or dissolved rather than allow that institution to be exploited by unscrupulous and selfish groups, who became willing and slavish tools in the hands of foreign exploiters. By such means, he exposed the whole show in its true nakedness, instead of permitting his enemies to parade under a false mask and posing before the world as conducting the administration with the apparent consent of the governed. The rulers, when they found themselves in a nasty corner, had either to carry on in a purely autocratic manner, playing the Tsar, a position difficult to maintain in the modern world, or to restore the parliament by directing fresh elections, thus surrendering

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

to the will of the people By this policy alone, and refusing to give up his hold on the parliament, Zaghlul managed to save the country from the humiliation, disgrace and disaster of accepting the treaty unreservedly Till the time of his death, the British, in spite of all the manoeuvres, tactics and bullying methods, were not able to get the cabinet and the parliament to accept that treaty with reservations and safeguards This question remained open, and various efforts were made even after the new constitution began to function to find a solution out of the impasse Zaghlul attended several conferences in England for the purpose, never refusing to discuss the subject with any party,—Labour, Liberal or Conservative, though never yielding to any

If the Wafd Party had boycotted the parliament and left that institution in the hands of Moderates and Liberals, there is no doubt that Lord Lloyd would have easily succeeded in getting the treaty accepted by the so-called 'parliament' with all the defects, and the rival parties would have gradually gained in strength and position by utilising the power vested in cabinet and government of the land, resulting in the gradual wiping out of the Zaghlulists Zaghlul refused to play into the hands of the enemy and sacrifice real interests and power for the sake of prestige, at the same time taking good care to see, that the poisonous parliamentary atmosphere and glamour of office and power did not lower their high standard of revolt and adversely affect the psychology and mentality of his party He also knew when to yield and even to surrender in order to save a dangerous and disastrous situation by means of a compromise that had the appearance of defeat Thus when he gave up his

BOOK I

right as a leader of absolute majority and accepted the premiership of a rival group, he agreed to work under them and fully co-operated with a defeated minority, apparently a situation of great humiliation, affecting the morale of the party and lowering its position with the masses, but that was the only alternative to a terrible disaster and catastrophe of bombardment and military and naval operations that would surely have followed his obstinately sticking to legal and constitutional right. The country would never have forgiven him for that calamity, and it would have caused a re-action against the party leading to its weakening and wiping out. On the other hand, by this timely surrender he did not only inflict a moral and diplomatic defeat on his enemy and foiled the attempt to force an odious treaty, but also considerably enhanced his own and party's prestige and position.

There have been two similar instances in modern history when acknowledged leaders of a powerful party, by surrendering their legal and constitutional rights, to be the head, and by means of compromise with the opposition, had saved very serious situations in the country and had avoided disaster and splits. Dr Sun-Yat-Sen, the father of the Chinese nationalist and republican movement and the acknowledged head, was the only and rightful claimant for the post of president of the first Republic in Nanking and Canton. His great desire was to bring about a union between the North and the South and thus save the country from disastrous civil war and also from foreign aggrandisement. Chiang-Seik, the leader of the North and Military Commander, agreed to a compromise on one condition alone, viz that he should be appointed the first President of the Republic. It was an unjust and

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

preposterous demand Dr Sun-Yat-Sen and his party had been struggling for this end for years and had achieved the goal after terrible hardships, sufferings and sacrifices and this place of honour was his legitimate due Chiang-Seik, his rival, had not only not contributed anything to bring about this result, but had done his best to avert it Therefore his demand now to be the President of the Republic was not only extremely unjust but highly preposterous Sun, considering the grave situation, put his country's interest above his own and his party's and he agreed to serve in a subordinate capacity under his erstwhile rival and enemy Such magnanimity in public life is rare and worthy of imitation

The second instance happened in Ireland when Arthur Griffiths, the founder and originator of Sin-Fein movement, gave up his claim to be the President of the Dail, though commanding a majority and confident of being elected to the post, in favour of DeValera, the leader of another group, and thus avoided a serious split in the Nationalists Assembly He accepted the subordinate position of a Vice-President

The fourth and the last lesson from this Islamic nation, is one we should like to repeat again and again though referred to before, in the hope that this repetition might create some impression on both the major and minor communities in India, viz the patriotic and nationalist spirit displayed by the "Kopts", an extremely minor community, in rejecting and spurning the offer of special protection from foreigners and preferring to throw in their lot with the nationalists in the land, and the generous and sympathetic response made by Zaghlulists to that high-spirited gesture by affording them better safe-

BOOK I

guards and securities than any statutory provision could ever have done

Before closing this chapter on the Egyptian question, so full of tragedies, we may briefly recapitulate four great lessons to be derived therefrom for the benefit of four essential groups that make up the body-politic of this country

Lesson No I to the youths Be not deluded under false sense of security Remember the Egyptian example. Be prepared for the future struggle even after the grant of bogus constitution

Lesson No II to our Moderate and Liberal friends. At a time of supreme crisis, refuse to be tools in the hands of wily and interested foreigners, save country's honour and existence by standing arm-in-arm with the congress, and face the common foe

Lesson No III to Congress Like the Egyptians and Zaghlulists, make use of all available means, legal and constitutional, as through the legislature and direct action outside, refuse to play into the hands of enemies, continue the struggle even against heavy odds till the final goal is reached. Without hesitation surrender and compromise, when no sacrifice of principle is involved, and save the country even by sacrificing party's interest as Zaghlul did by giving up personal or party rights

Last to the sister communities. The major communities must treat minorities with generosity and sympathy even beyond their expectation and thus gain their trust Like the Kopts, minorities should put confidence in their own countrymen and themselves, and, not adopt a beggarly attitude for special protection from foreigners.

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

We cannot close this both inspiring and pathetic chapter on the Egyptian national struggle without a brief reference to the modern and almost current events; because from the point of view of political study these last days furnish as instructive and useful, though depressing lessons to Indian Nationalist, so that under exactly similar circumstances we may avoid pitfalls into which Egyptian Nationalism seems to be temporarily buried. We have already seen how gallantly and courageously, even for a short time after the death of Zaghlul, his successors carried on the struggle, acting up to the high traditions and reputation of the glorious and heroic founder of the Wafdists, Zaghlul Pasha, how till the last they resisted both the machinations and the machine guns of the British, to force down their throat the unacceptable and humiliating clauses in the treaty, and how as a result of the combined action of all the parties, through the instrumentality of the king, the British diplomats got the Egyptian parliament suspended for three years,—that was in July 1928

At this stage unfortunately Egyptian Nationalism and politics enter a deplorable phase and a re-action sets in for various causes. When we compare the tremendous hold that the Zaghlulists had over the masses and the power they wielded only a few years ago, compelling not only the king but even the mighty British Empire to yield to their demand, with the practical impotency and inanity to which they are reduced to day, we cannot help feeling a sort of depression at such a pathetic tragedy. In 1919 the force of agitation was so great that Allenby had to hurry back from England, leaving the important peace conference and had to cancel the order of deportation against Zaghlul and five others within a few days of its

BOOK I

issue, a humiliation that shattered the British prestige, not only in Egypt but also in the whole world. Even in later days the complete and effectual boycott of Milner Commission compelled them to tramp about the country like a batch of deserters or escaped refugees, instead of strutting about like proud imperialists, representatives of the British Crown and Cabinet, proving that even till 1921-22 the Egyptian national movement was very much alive and still kicking as violently as ever. The same life and vitality continued till about 1927-28, so that the notorious British bureaucrat had to resort to most extraordinary military measures and seek the protection of British gunboats and warships, as normal measures of repression and oppression were not considered sufficient to meet the abnormal situation, making even that arrogant Baron to bend and retire before his time. This was the proud record of Zaghlulists and Wafdists for nearly ten to fifteen years, when they dominated the country both as a party in power in the parliament as well as an army of constructive workers outside. The British High Commissioner, the Egyptian puppet king and the whole gang of their henchmen and hirelings the palace party, had to bow before the popular will, and flunkies like Sidkey and Ziver, dared not raise their heads. Moderates and Liberals could only survive by placing themselves under the powerful protective wings of the Wafdists.

It is one of the saddest political tragedies of modern times to find that such a potential and all powerful political party in Egypt almost being evaporated and rendered effeminate, only in three or four years after the death of the great leader. Let us examine the causes of this unfortunate decay. How is it that a party and people that could not be crushed or wiped out by all the engines

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

of imperialist repression, that could survive and retain its original vitality, nay even grow stronger in spite of martial laws, ordinances, executive decrees, wholesale deportations, imprisonments and reprisals, resulting in a grave loss of life and property, a vessel that could weather all that storm in the stormiest weather in mid-ocean and still steer clear, how is it that such a weather-proof, storm-proof and ocean-proof vessel should be almost shipwrecked in a comparatively calm weather and in safe harbour, almost secure in a dry-dock ? Only the other day, June-July 1932, the nationalists in India as also, we presume, in all parts of the world, must have been shocked to hear through the press that Nahas Pasha, the successor of Zaghlul, the Egyptian tiger, and Mohamed Pasha, the leader of the Liberals and Moderates, had addressed a humble petition to the king, praying for the restoration of the parliament and constitution that was suspended in July 1928 for three years. Apparently, even after the expiration of the original period, the restoration had not taken place. What a fall of nationalism ! What a triumph for British Imperialism and Egyptian Bureaucracy ! What a sad plight and humiliation for this once proud and selfrespecting nation that only five years ago would not tolerate even a smaller outrage on national rights and privileges ! A nation that a few years ago could compel the restoration of their deported leader in a few days, that could deport an Imperial Commission in a few week's time, that could force the British Statesmen and Cabinet to recall their arrogant and pompous autocratic representative, Baron Lloyd, that embarrassed and paralysed the combined conspiracy of British diplomacy and local bureaucracy,—that great and glorious nation,

should today be reduced to such humiliating impotency that, instead of proudly demanding for its rights and privileges, as it was accustomed to do, standing on their own legs, it should, after being deprived for three long years, be now forced to resort to the antiquated, exploded and effeminate method of petitioning to the authorities for the restoration of most elementary constitutional rights, and even for that humble and humiliating procedure, should seek the assistance and co-operation of the Moderate Party. As if this humiliation was not enough, the tragedy is still made more black, by the arrogant and insulting manner in which the British hireling, the nominee of Imperialism, Sidkey Pasha responds to the generous gesture. In his reply to the petition of the Wafdists and Liberals from his present position and power, he pompously declares that "the Wafdists are dead with their great leader, Zaghlul. So the Imperialism and autocracy can live and flourish again. Let us hear no more nonsensical talk about constitution and national rights or people's privileges. We can get on very well as we have been doing for the last three years and more, with a nominated cabinet, with pliant and accommodating ornamental dummies like myself at its head, and still more ornamental and equally bogus parliament, that dare not oppose British Imperialist demands through the local Grand Moghul King Faud." With a retort as appropriate as it is just, he asks "has any power or vested interest ever yielded to the innocent, harmless and effeminate method of petitioning or pleading, or even protests?" Thus roars Sidkey Pasha, a lamb in Zaghlulists' days now masked in lions skin, before an audience at Alexandra, a platform that neither he nor his predecessor Ziver dare face in the days of Zaghlul, with an impudence that

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

might have cost him his life had he ventured to utter such words in those gallant days. Yet the crowd listens to this arrant nonsense, apparently calmly and patiently, without a word of protest, thus giving more courage to this once timid under-dog, creating a false sense of pride and confidence in his own power and the new imperialist methods. A nation that could tamely submit to such a national insult and humiliation, after having timidly submitted to a national outrage of suspension of constitution for more than three years perhaps does not deserve its freedom.

We will not be hasty in our judgment, but wait and see as to what steps the leaders and the nation adopt to restore the lost power, position and prestige of the Egyptian nationhood. The struggling nationalists of India and other parts of the world, are watching them with intense anxiety and concern. Let us hope that the Egyptians will give a proper reply to this insolent challenge, a reply befitting and becoming to the great name and greater traditions of their dead hero, Zaghlul Pasha.

But whilst hoping and praying for their success, we may also profit by their misfortune, and for this purpose, examine the causes that have led to the national calamity and the great fall. Unless we are forewarned and forearmed against the pitfalls, it is quite possible that the fate of the Wafdists today may be the fate of the National Congress in India to-morrow. The first lessons that the Indian Nationalists should learn from the Egyptian misfortune is not to depend entirely upon one individual alone, however great, good and super-human that indivi-

dual may be In the days of his highest glory, Zaghlul became the idol of the people, and particularly of the Youth, so that instead of becoming a symbol of national cause, he became, as it were, a separate object of worship himself, separated from the cause he represented However great a personality may be it should never be allowed to submerge the cause The popular enthusiasm the public devotion, the spirit to suffer and sacrifice should all emanate from a high sense of duty and attachment to the country and not out of any personal regard or affection for a national hero, though during his life-time he may entirely assimilate himself and gloriously symbolise the country's ideal That accounts for the apparently inexplicable political phenomena in Egypt, a mere deportation of Zaghlul and his comrades electrified the whole country, compelling the authorities to yield in a few days to the indomitable will, courage and determination of the Zaghlul-mad people That incidentally also proves the capacity, sincerity and the power of the people who could be roused to such spontaneous enthusiasm and action without any organised or systematic propaganda or incitement But the same people only a few years *after the death of that national hero*, meekly and tamely submit to a much greater national outrage, a more degrading and aggravating humiliation, resulting in not only deportation and deprivation of liberty of a few revered and loved leaders, but the deportation of the whole constitution, depriving the nation of its birth-right, Incidentally, the Egyptian tragedy also teaches another useful lesson to India In any national struggle, whether violent or non-violent, it is disastrous always to look to one outstanding figure and personality alone for national guidance, control and management Though in

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

a national crisis some sort of dictatorship is always deemed essential for maintaining strict discipline, efficiency and organisation, so long as the crisis lasts, still it would be equally essential and necessary for other national institutions and individuals not to abdicate entirely in favour of that one super-personality, but to carry on and function, so far as normal and day to-day national activities are concerned. For some years past, a deplorable tendency is noticeable in India to shift the responsibility in almost every conceivable matter of national, social or communal importance on one individual, on one saintly, and almost superhuman head, and Sabarmati had as it were, become the national encyclopaedia of India, a general book for reference on all conceivable subjects under the Indian sky. The banks of Sabarmati contained one beacon-light that was to shed every kind of lustre all over the country, so that by merely turning to that oracle, all problems, political, social, religious, communal and sometimes even private and domestic, are supposed to be automatically solved. Whilst none can dispute that in the present generation, one saintly presence has converted, and rightly converted Sabarmati into a place for universal pilgrimage, the one fountain-head from which wisdom, philosophy and true guidance is derived for all people and on all subjects, still we cannot help feeling that at the same time this habit of constant reference, deprives the several national and public institutions as well as individuals of initiative, engendering a lethargic mood, unwilling to shoulder individual or specific responsibilities and gradually losing confidence in self. Such a tendency, if not checked in time, would lead to national decay and disaster, particularly when we find before our eyes, in our time,

BOOK I

such results mainly due to similar circumstances in our neighbouring and struggling oriental country of Egypt, Zaghlul, when he lived, was perhaps in a smaller degree to Egypt what Mahatma Gandhi is to India today. Unfortunately for the struggling nations, whatever qualities, virtue and power these national heroes may possess, it will be well for them to remember that no amount of prayer, affection and devotion can make them immortal. On the contrary, the very burden they carry daily on their shoulders goes every day to shorten their lives. There is after all a limit to human energy, human labour and human capacity. When that limit is crossed, the law of nature inflicts its penalty for transgressing her rules, and collapse and breakdown follows, very often resulting in national disaster by premature or sudden death. Then with the disappearance of that one outstanding national personality a great depression and re-action sets in, a feeling of helplessness prevails, and the consequent despondency leads to national lethargy and even to inaction and inanity. Once the beacon light is extinguished, the rudderless ship is tossed about in political storms without a captain. It is under such a state of confusion, fright, depression and inaction that timid traitors of the type of Sidkey Pasha in Egypt, dare raise their heads, and with the help of unscrupulous and selfish re-actionary diplomats, treacherously attempt to undo all the great national achievements, achieved after years of sacrifice, suffering and devotion under the departed hero.

Let India beware ! Let the National Congress and its leaders take heed in good time, lest the calamity of Egypt be repeated in India. The departure of Zaghlul

EGYPTIAN EXPERIMENT

apparently meant the death of national struggle. It was not only the death of a leader, but along with it also died the Wafdist party. Let the national cry be "Party above every or any individual, and country's cause above all." God grant long life to our leaders, and I know every true patriot will willingly give away, if he could, at least one or two years of his own life, to extend theirs. We may as civil-resisters defy man-made immoral laws, but we have to helplessly submit to divine mandates.

In order to retain a hold on the masses, in order to capture their imagination and continue our political power, some militant aggressive direct-action programme is quite essential. The Wafdists in Egypt survived and maintained their hold so long as they continued an active and kicking policy, mostly in the legislature either as an effective and powerful opposition or popular and progressive cabinet, and at the same time carried on a vigorous constructive programme outside in the country. With the suspension of parliament for a long time, their main activities in the legislature ceased, and instead of launching directly some vigorous direct action and constructive programme in the country, to make up for the lost power and position in the legislature, the leaders apparently committed the grave blunder of relapsing into lethargy and inaction, with the result that the masses, leaderless, drifted back to indifference and repose, thus leaving the road clear for reactionaries and autocracy and loyalists. A mere petition to the king, even though made by all parties jointly, without any effective sanction to back it up, was bound to meet with the rebuff that Sidkey Pasha dared to give. The Egyptian example has proved more demonstrably the necessity for a vigorous militant

BOOK I

national programme of direct action, and we hope that our Moderate friends will also profit by this misfortune. The latest attempt (beginning of 1933) to solve the deadlock, was secret "Pardah" Confabulations between the 'Palace Nominees' and Sir Wordlaw Milne, the British representative. We wish our Egyptian comrades-in-arms God-Speed and all Success!

CHAPTER IV.

IRELAND AND INDIA.

THE COMMUNAL ISSUE

In the last chapter we have made humble and superficial efforts to place a small summary of Egyptian struggle, as viewed and studied from Indian Nationalists' point of view. In the present one, our intention is to deal from a similar angle, the Irish problem and try to discover from the trend of events, for the last four or five centuries upto date, points of similarity that may help the Indian Nationalists in solving somewhat akin questions here. At the outset we have to recognise one outstanding difference whilst drawing Indo-Irish parallels.

In one respect the Egyptian question bears greater resemblance to India, in so far as both these countries are oriental, and therefore, from the arrogant and conceited viewpoint of the "White nations" of the West, supposed to suffer from an 'inferiority complex'. Hence in regard to both these nations we often read and hear about the same British jargon as the "white man's Burden" or the "Divine Trust" and such devilish bunkum and stupid delusions from which Churchillian and Lloydist brands suffer. How hollow and hypocritical is that plea is proved by the current and even ancient history of Ireland, when, though the struggle was between two white people practically of the same religion, tradition and origin, the British imperialistic arrogance and impudence was no less and in many respects, both in the method and manner of dealing, the same if not worse, than the disreputable and dubious ways adopted on Eastern soil.

BOOK I

In spite of these important differences, Ireland still in many respects presents a political picture more or less similar to India, even more horrid than the nearest oriental country of Egypt. In one respect, particularly the Irish history, both ancient and modern, becomes very interesting and instructive to a student of Indian politics, and that is in regard to the much vexed and much discussed, and apparently insoluble question of the two great communities inhabiting this land. At some points the resemblance, and similarity becomes so marked and significant, that it would almost be difficult for a casual reader to distinguish one from the other, and some passages from the history of one can safely be transmitted to another, with only a change in the names of individuals, races or places. Whether the question is between Catholics and Protestants or Celts and Saxons as in Ireland, or Hindus and Mahomedans as in India, the British policy, is the same.

It would be convenient to divide the subject into two or three periods beginning with about three or four centuries ago. The pre-historic period mainly deals with the inter-communal situation and the religious fanaticism and bigotry as it existed, and to some extent still exists in Ireland, in contrast with the comparative tolerance and religious freedom in India of the same period. A brief reference to the modern political movement known as Sinn-Fein may be made comparing it with the similar constructive movement or organisation as represented by the Indian National Congress. That period would cover the trend of events leading up from the Easter Rebellion of 1916 and the more militant and rebellious political upheaval of 1918 upto the treaty of 1921-22 corresponding to the growth of national movement in India beginning.

IRELAND AND INDIA

with the Bengal Partition agitation in 1905 and also the more aggressive and militant, though non-violent Congress campaign in India. And lastly, the most important period covers the peace negotiations, the treaty, the unfortunate split in the ranks of Irish Nationalist and the most vital and momentous issue,—the acceptance or rejection of the new constitution,—almost coinciding with the critical stage through which India is passing to-day, the Round Table Conference, the new constitution and the issue that will loom large in the political horizon in India, putting into shade all other issues, viz., the attitude to be taken up with regard to the new constitution, the raking up of the old problem of Council-boycott or Council-entry.

The one potent and plausible argument always advanced and most relied upon by Tory Diehards in England against self-rule and self-determination in India, is the supposed friction and disharmony between the two great communities,—Hindus and Muslims. A never-failing attempt is made to prove that till complete internal communal unity is achieved, self-government would be a most dangerous experiment, resulting in a great disaster, which may necessitate the immediate recall of the "Divine Trustees" to restore the situation. Our reply has always been, that even if the situation is so hopeless and desperate as attempted to be made out, as inherent in the country, and not engineered and inspired by foreigners to serve their own selfish ends, the pictures as drawn by jaundiced diehards is not only one sided and partial, but is also grossly exaggerated. We can make bold to say and challenge our worst enemy to gainsay it, that though the inter-communal situation in India, particularly of late, is not what the best patriots on either side would desire to

be, though deplorable and regrettable scenes and occasional outbursts often tarnish the hitherto clean record, so as to put the true nationalists of both the communities to shame and distress, still we must venture to maintain, without fear of contradiction that in spite of all these defects and weak points, the inter-communal situation in India, even to-day, as it has always been before, much better, much smoother, much more cordial and harmonious than in several Christian countries in the West, including Ireland and some British Colonies. When we read of the thrilling accounts of almost incredible, most inhuman and brutal atrocities which disgraced and blackened the pages of history of other countries in East and West, we may even be justly proud of the more humane, more civilised and brighter records of Indian history on the same subject, whose pages read like silver linings to the disgusting and bloody chapters of Christian histories. Among the many incidents are to be found the horrible inquisition in Spain, the terrible French Barthomleu and other massacres, the atrocious persecution and brutal massacres of Catholics and Protestants, Celts and Saxons, even in England and Ireland, and senseless and cruel orgies to exterminate the whole Jewish race, the mad pursuits of endless Crusades, the feuds between Arabs and Jews and Armenians in Palestine and Turkey and Smyrna and in parts of Africa, the Turks, Italians and Greeks engaged in mad religious warfare in borderland, not to speak of the ferocious feuds even in Islamic lands between Shias and Sunnies, reflections of which were witnessed in our city of Bombay uptil a few years ago, when there was an annual recurring danger during Tazias, when the Shias had to be protected from the violent fury of their co-religionists, by giving them shelter in non-Muslim quarters.

IRELAND AND INDIA

When we compare the darkest pages in the histories mostly of the Christian world, blood-curdling fury that reddened the soil of Mother Earth with rivers of human blood, spilt regardless of sex or age or any other consideration, impelled only by a senseless and mad religious fanaticism, the glowing pages of Indian history of the same period give a refreshing relief to the distressed human soul. India was the only safe and secure asylum for all the persecuted religions and races of both the hemispheres, where people rushed from distant lands, to save their religion and lives, and where for the first time, after years of persecution, they tasted sweet hospitality and generous tolerance, that was denied to them in their own country and by their own people. The original Christian sect known as the "Thomases" in Malabar with ancient Christian churches, intact for centuries, till devastated by the unkind hand of nature, scattered all over the country, at a time and period, when sacred places of worship were desecrated by one sect or another in Christian countries themselves. These were glorious mementoes, furnishing incontrovertible proofs of religious tolerance and freedom of faith extended to Christian religion in non-Christian countries of the East, protection and freedom that were denied in most Christian countries in the West. Similarly on the romantic coast of Cochin, very ancient Jewish synagogues still survive, with a Jewish sect, ancient records and scriptures all intact again furnishing additional proof that the hospitable shores of India alone, gave quarters to a race that was so cruelly persecuted and ruthlessly massacred in all the Christian countries of the West.

Compare the history of both countries, England and India, even at a period most favourable to England. In

BOOK I

the 17th century when Great Britain had advanced politically to such an extent as to overthrow a Protestant monarch and established what was considered in those days a republican government, the Cromwellian Commonwealth, even in the so called reformed Parliament in 1654, having Jurisdiction over England, Scotland and Ireland, "all Catholics were deprived both of the rights of voting and of being voted for," i.e. in an assembly of 460 members there could not be a single Catholic member, nor a single voter in a population of millions of Catholics in Great Britain, almost equal if not more than, Privileged Protestants the constitution affording no protection to "Papists and Papperies" As Cromwell himself complained, "Liberty of conscience and liberty of subject, are two of the most glorious things to be contented for as God ever gave us,—yet both these were abused and reserved for patronising villains"

Just turn to the brighter pages in Indian history about the same period with a few years' difference Akbar, the greatest and the most progressive Moghul Emperor, had already set a glorious example, not only before the whole of India, but rest of the Christian world, in religious tolerance and freedom of conscience, when papists and pagans, Hindus and Parsees, Jews and Gentiles received the same protection and hospitality with the followers of Mahomed, at a time when a Catholic in England could neither be a voter nor a member of Parliament, Hindus in Akbar's regime, and even for some years after could occupy highest and most responsible posts in the State, enjoying practically the same protection and privileges, still curiously enough Britain is called upon today to solve the Indian communal problem !

IRELAND AND INDIA

That the same intolerant spirit prevailed in Christian countries upto modern times, in spite of all so-called civilisation and progress, is evidenced by the ghastly and barbarous stories of Christians, massacring each other as witnessed recently in the last Balkan war. Several letters written by Balkan soldiers, Serbs or Bulgarians, were disclosed before an International Commission to enquire into the Balkan war in 1914, which showed that these soldiers indulged in most ruthless and inhuman orgies of wholesale massacres of old men, women and children plucking out the eyes of living soldiers, devastating peaceful and non-combatant towns and villages, all under the direction of Christian commanders and actuated by racial animosity or religious hatred

Even after the Balkan War the slaughter of Turkish and Armenians shocked the whole civilised world. A passage from the British Encyclopaedia will suffice to support this statement —

The crowning triumph of the Cross (Christians) was celebrated by cold-blooded massacre of 2000 Turkish prisoners of all ages and both sexes" (The Morea Massacres)

These things are happening in our own times in Western countries. Whereas in India on the Western Coast in the town of Udwada, a small but intensely religious community of Parsees, even today worships the sacred fire, still burning continuously for the last 1300 years, when that sacred fire and the small sect of its worshippers, were both in danger of extinction in their own dear father-land of Iran. The little flame, flickering for all these centuries, devotedly being kept alive by being regularly fed at stated intervals by sweet-flavoured

BOOK I

incense and sacred sandalwood, is never-dying, ever-enduring, and the most illuminating testimony of religious tolerance and freedom of conscience enjoyed by all the inhabitants of this ancient traditional land. It has outlived so many kingdoms of different faiths and creeds, it has weathered safely through so many storms both political and natural, being sustained and protected not by physical sustenance and endurance alone, but by the strong faith of its worshippers and by the equally generous tolerance of the original inhabitants of this country. The survival of this smallest religious community in the world and the preservation of its separate identity, through these many centuries, is one of the most wonderful phenomena of the world, reflecting as much credit on the gallant and enterprising small band of Parsees, as on the hospitable, tolerant, original inhabitants of this country amongst whom they were reared up.

As long as this sacred fire continues to burn in the ancient fire-temple at Udwarda, as long as the shores of Sanjan, a place of pilgrimage for the Parsees, continues to hold that historical memorial to commemorate the first landing of the gallant band, so long also the flame of patriotism, kindled by gratitude and devotion, will burn in the grateful hearts of all true Zoroastrians. The same flame of patriotism will also reduce to cinders, the ridiculous, scandalous and almost malicious assertions and aspersions of the few Anglicised, Westernised loyalists who, through their coloured glasses and jaundiced eyes see danger to religion and community in the rapidly approaching "Swaraj"

Any fair-minded and unbiased student of Indian history, even after a perfunctory and superficial study,

IRELAND AND INDIA

will come to the conclusion that with very few deplorable exceptions, the same generous and liberal spirit of tolerance and freedom of conscience and religion, pervaded throughout this long historical period, that the campaigns and war-fares, and at times cruel struggles between the different communities, were not of a religious character as inquisitions or persecutions, but merely arising from a greed and desire for territorial possession and political power. Even when temples and places of worship were despoiled, the underlying motive in most cases was the greed for wealth and not wanton desecration due to religious bigotry, as the valuable Jewellery and possession of the deities were fit objects for loot just as much as palaces of kings and nobilities. It is true we cannot shut our eyes to the three or four bigotted potentates that spoiled this clean record by betraying overzeal and fanaticism, but even this vice was confined to individual exceptions and not pervading the spirit in the general mass of population as we notice in the Christian countries. With these few exceptions covering a small period that rather prove the rule, the general record on both sides is most edifying and gratifying. Numerous old monuments scattered over in all parts of the country bear testimony even today to the tolerance and freedom of that period. How often do we come across the pleasant ancient sight of Hindu temples and Mohamedan mosques almost adjoining each other? How many Hindu temples are actually situated in old Mohamedan strongholds like forts and castles! Even in the Palghat Fort the district head-quarters of that devout Mohamedan Tipu Sultan, a beautiful old Hindu temple, still in almost intact state, is a sight for the tourist, and almost in the heart of the Mohamedan palace-grounds of Bijapur kingdom, the guides point out a spot

BOOK I

on which a small temple of Hindu deity is erected, with a special arrangement made for a Hindu worshipper, favourite of the Mohamedan kings. Similar arrangement and facilities for Mohamedan worshippers are seen in ancient Hindu palaces. Intermarriages were contracted on a fairly large scale in the noblest families on both sides, and several high and responsible posts, including that of the governor of a province and the Commander of Armies, and even of Prime-ministers and Bankers were held by members of one community under the regime of another. Each side tried to understand and even appreciate the religious standpoint of the other, even at times making a close philosophical study of each other's religion. The most gratifying circumstance was the complete harmony, unity and cordiality that prevailed in the general masses, and particularly amongst the peasantry. With few exceptions there was general equality of treatment, no discrimination was made either in administration of justice or recovery of taxes. 'Jazia', a communal tax, levied in the time of Aurangzeb, was most unpopular in a large section of Mohamedans and was got rid of at the earliest opportunity. Mahomed of Gazni and Aurangzeb are perhaps two exceptions that spoil the otherwise clean record, as one or two on the other side too displayed similar over-enthusiasm. But there were as stated above, exceptions on both sides that bring out into greater prominence and relief the virtuous qualities of others.

It is not necessary to go into further details on this subject, because it is known to even an elementary student of Indian history and apparent to any observer who travels about the land. If India has any complaint to make in respect of religious tolerance and freedom of conscience, it should be just the other way. Too much of

even a good thing is not desirable from reformists' and rationalists' point of view. So many undesirable customs and practices are either winked at or even encouraged with a view to respect the religious susceptibilities, and at times, false sentiments of both the communities. How often in public institutions, and even in legislatures, members of one community hesitate to support a measure of reform on the plea that it may offend the religious feelings of the other and their attitude is likely to be misunderstood and misconstrued. The great Russian Revolutionist had truly said that "Religion is the opium of the people", and it is the extra dose of the opium in this country that probably accounts for its present stalemate and retrograde condition with regard to many much-needed social and communal reforms. No other country in the world possesses intact so many ancient symbols of almost all the great religions observed and followed by mankind for ages past, Hindu temples (including those of Jains and Sikhs), Mohamedan mosques (of both sects, Shias and Sunies, and even of sub-sects Isna Shariffs, Aga Khanists, &c), Christian Churches (of both creeds, Catholic Cathedrals as well as Protestant Churches), Jewish synagogues, Buddhists' caves and stupas, Parsee Fire-temples (also of both sects, Shanshai and Kadumie) besides Theosophical settlement, Arya Samajists and scores of Missionaries are scattered all over the place.

It is not the Queen's Proclamation, as is often suggested, that gives protection to all and allows these divergent faiths and various creeds to flourish and grow in this great cosmos, because most of these existed long before the advent of British rule. It is the inherent virtue, inborn temperament of the people, inherited from their

great ancestors, ages and ages before Queen Victoria was born

Unfortunately, during the present generation, it must be frankly confessed that this glorious and clean record is partially soiled, but even then we should not be much obsessed by the exaggerated accounts in interested press, and one-sided reports of self-seeking individuals. We shall presently show, by facts and figures, that the darkest intercommunal episode in the worst of centres in India, is like a bright spot compared with the religious ferocity and fanaticism existing in other, particularly in the Christian countries. These outbursts are spasmodic, confined to some affected areas, particularly in large cities spreading like a sudden conflagration, raging for the time being, leading, no doubt, to worst orgies while they last, but they subside as suddenly as they burst, and once more normal conditions are restored. Even in their darkest days, there could not be more than a very small percentage of the population on either side that actually participates in violent outbursts, the rest of the very large majority, even in the affected areas, not only remaining neutral but joining in combined efforts to suppress the fanatic element on both sides. Again we must also remember that these occasions are seized as great opportunities by a large section of the hooligan element in all large and cosmopolitan cities, whose only concern is loot, with the idea of making hay while the sun shines, regardless of the consideration for one community or another, very often victimising members of their own community, or often still a gang composed of both, carrying on an indiscriminate attack on both the communities simultaneously, in the current report, all these are naturally put down to communal fury of one against another.

IRELAND AND INDIA

Let us examine the two concrete and parallel instances one in Ireland and the other in India,—to understand and appreciate the points of difference between the two. In Ireland, Belfast, the capital of the Ulster Province, is considered perhaps the most notorious for its fanatic zeal and religious bigotry, which to some extent would unfortunately correspond to the notoriety in the same wicked direction recently acquired by our city of Bombay. Communal troubles in Belfast, between Catholics and Protestants, are particularly, or up'til very recently, of frequent occurrence with violent outbursts, resulting in street-battles, somewhat similar to those witnessed by the citizens of Bombay recently. Nevertheless, the many redeeming features in the deplorable situation in Bombay are lacking under similar circumstances in Belfast. In Bombay, even during the worst days, when in a certain part of the city communal fury was at its worst all other inter-communal institutions and organisations, both government and private, were functioning quite normally, maintaining the same cordiality, unity and harmony amongst its members as in normal times, and even engaging themselves seriously and earnestly in suppressing the disturbances and restoring order. The Executive government, composed of members of both the communities apparently administered jointly over the whole population composed of both, without discrimination and not separated and divided as in Ireland between Ulster and Dublin into two separate compartments for two separate religions.

The next institution of equal importance is the civic government, the Bombay Municipal Corporation, similarly a mixed body working with remarkable harmony and cordiality for years and paying particular

BOOK I

regard and respect for all the religions and even prejudices. At the first symptom of communal trouble, it immediately proceeds to form a mixed peace committee, consisting of representatives of both the communities, and throughout the period of trouble the committee works jointly with the active co-operation and assistance of prominent members of both the communities. How different it is from Belfast, where during such upheavals prominent members of both the communities range themselves into two opposite camps and form into war cabinets directing, and encouraging the campaign on either side ! Only recently, during such a communal riot, it was proposed in the Belfast Municipal Corporation that the cobble stones and metals from the roads should be removed and roads should be asphalted and macadamized because the cobble and metal stones were used by rioters as missiles. There being a majority of Protestants in the Corporation, the resolution was modified, so that it was resolved that these dangerous missiles should be removed only from Catholic quarters and allowed to remain in larger areas where Protestants resided, so as to afford facilities to Protestant rioters to use them against their opponents, the Catholics. Is such a ridiculous and preposterous proposition ever conceivable in our Bombay Municipal Corporation, though it contains a large majority of one community over the other ? Womanhood in India, including in Bombay, exerts a pacifying and harmonising influence and always adopts an attitude discouraging communalism on both sides. It is gratifying to find that when many of the male organisations and institutions were halting and hesitating in their attitude towards the question of Franchise, women came forward boldly with proposals more liberal and nationalist than

IRELAND AND INDIA

those of the opposite sex. Again during the days of communal riots in Bombay as elsewhere, we have never heard of women, even of the lowest strata of society, participating directly or indirectly in the disturbances. When they came out, it was only to join the nationalist ranks, to work side by side with the Congress workers, to restore peace and order, and the one redeeming feature in this dark episode was that even the worst hooligan in his wildest fury did not sink so low as to make a cowardly and deliberate attack on the gentler sex. There were one or two exceptions, when women received injuries, which were admittedly cases of unintentional and accidental assaults. But the so-called more advanced, more civilised and supposed to be more delicate Belfast ladies of the West, formed themselves into bands of volunteers, not for doing nationalist peace-work but to advance the communalists' campaign, and during actual trouble were engaged in collecting all sorts of missiles such as stones, iron nuts, sticks and port-bottles to facilitate the work of their male comrades.

So also is the case with children. From an early age they are brought up in that bigotted atmosphere, taught to hate the opposite sex and entirely brought up in separate surroundings and even separate schools. Unlike in India, the youth organisations in Ireland are worst infected institutions with communal spirit, carrying their tirades even in the field of sports. In India, whatever the relations between certain sections, at least in the field of sports a sporting spirit and complete harmony prevails. Often a cricket or foot-ball team is composed of mixed members from both or all the communities, but in Belfast, the poison and pollution is even carried to that extent and a football field is often converted, in the

BOOK I

midst of a game, into a regular battle-field between two warring sections of Catholics and Protestants

India luckily has not reached such a state of degeneration, and let us hope and pray that it will never reach that stage. Here, the infection is still confined to the few, the rest, a very large majority, being absolutely free from the poison. If there are separate schools in India, it is because of the two separate languages being taught at primary stages. After passing that preliminary stage, we seldom find separate educational institutions, divided strictly according to communities. A Mohamedan college admits freely Hindus as well as other communities, and a Hindu University throws its doors open for Mohamedans as well as Christians. Thousands of clerks belonging to different communities sit together daily not only in the same office rooms, but very often at the same desk. More remarkable still is that millions of labourers and peasants work and live together in a manner so as to make it difficult for an outsider to distinguish a member of one community from the other. Hundreds of families still live as good neighbours, often in the same building and same street, and it is a common pleasing sight to see members of one community giving shelter and protection, in times of disturbances, to the members of another, often even at the risk of their own lives. How often volunteers of one community guard and protect quarters and houses of the opposite community! In public services, like the Police and Municipality, entrusted with the task of providing common protection and common civic amenities and comforts, there is seldom a complaint of discrimination, favouritism or patronage purely on communal or religious grounds, and even in administration of justice, members

IRELAND AND INDIA

of both the communities may be safely entrusted with the difficult and responsible task, their prejudices and bias being confined only to political cases, though maintaining a balanced and impartial attitude in communal and religious matters

Not so in unfortunate Belfast and the rest of that country. Beginning with the division of the country into two separate compartments purely on communal lines the same deplorable tendency is noticed throughout, from separate schools and residential quarters right upto the higher institutions and organisations

But if one desires to know the real communal harmony and unity in India, the best place for study of that wonderful phenomenon is the Indian jail, whose inmates are far removed from outside pernicious and mischievous influences, sharing the same hardships and discomforts, partaking of common food prepared in one kitchen, living for months and years under the same roof often sharing the same cells and barracks, labouring together in the same workshop, factory or work-house, lashed by the same whip, controlled by the same staff, observing the same discipline and even attired in the same kind of clothing, particularly headgear. Their lives are completely assimilated so as to make them entirely forget the artificial surrounding and circumstances that sometimes keep them asunder in the outer world, and the closest tie and bond of friendship and comradeship spring up between them absolutely regardless of the caste, community, sect, religion or creed, so that a high-class Hindu prisoner would often form a close and affectionate attachment to a Mohamedan, as perhaps does not exist between two most affectionate brothers outside.

BOOK I

One would not take his meals in the absence of another very often mixing up the frugal meal in the same plate or "thali" and partaking of it together. In the case of illness, one would tend to the other with the most tender care and affection, sacrificing his own little comforts including bedding and blankets and himself lying on bare floor. If one by chance managed to get some contraband stuff as "biddies" beetle-nuts or any eatable besides the jail-food, which is always looked upon as a delicacy, they would always share these things, no matter how small the quantity may be. During our period of imprisonment in different jails, we were allowed even in "B" class a class-Hindu as a convict servant, and whenever we spared or offered some eatable from our frugal supply, he would carefully store it until the evening to share it with his Mohamedan comrade slyly after they were locked up together. Both Hindu and Mohamedan festivals are observed in common by both. Such a generosity and kindness, even in their miserable state of distress and want, was a touching sight. Such virtuous qualities we seldom notice amongst the opulent and well-provided free men outside the jail who grudge to part with even such things as they can well afford to spare.

From the literature available on the subject, we know that the judiciary and even juries in Ireland cannot be trusted to discharge their functions honestly and impartially, when unfortunately a victim of the opposite sect happened to come within their clutches. Very often judges and other responsible officials, having a better sense of their high office and duties had to bewail such an attitude, and they openly declared that in Ireland, in

IRELAND AND INDIA

communal and also in political matters, justice was distorted and trials were mockeries. We have to make similar complaints with regard to political trials in India, though luckily not in communal cases

An Irish Lord Chancellor once declared that 'the law does not suppose any such person to exist as an Irish Roman Catholic', and Edmund Burke's description of Irish Penal Code is worth quoting —

"A machine-device of ingenious and elaborate contrivance and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment and degradation of a people and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man"

Lord Deputy Chichester, boasting as to how he established the foundation for Protestant Ulster, stated —

"I brushed all along sparing none, killed people regardless of age or sex, besides many were burned to death. We killed man, woman, child, horse, beast and whatever we could find"

Can we find a more barbarous and atrocious confession not only in India but in the remotest and most uncivilised parts of Africa? Still only two or three centuries ago, when India could boast of humane civilisation and humanitarian methods, Irish Lords, responsible state-officials actually took pride in making such a declaration. Both the parties were engaged in never-ending efforts to exterminate one another throughout the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, either by acts of Parliament such as 'An act to prevent further growth of Papacy,' 1704, acts to expropriate Catholics from lands and whole areas, or violent outbursts resulting in open rebellion such as

in 1641, 1798 and later rebellions. Even so far back as 1793 Lord Westmoreland made a prophetic declaration that came true over a century after. He said, "If Irish Catholics were emancipated for state purposes, it would ultimately lead to the establishment of Irish Republic." De Valera is to-day fulfilling or attempting to fulfill that prophecy. The government of those days being apprised of the approaching danger, tried to meet the menace by the usual methods of "Divide and Rule." "The government deliberately preferred massacre and anarchy as a lesser evil than the co-operation of Catholics and Protestants. If all that fury and force were not spent on one another, they would probably be turned against the Government." Such was the short-sighted policy by which the statesmen of those days were guided, as we will see later, with disastrous results to themselves.

In about 1800, Lord Lake, a Protestant Cabinet Minister, referring to Catholic upheaval, wrote —

"I much wish these villains give us an opportunity of breaking them in a summary manner. You may rest assured they will not have much mercy after we once begin. We will do everything to rid this country of these rebellious scoundrels. Nothing but terror will keep them in order."

General Abercromby, C-in-C in Ireland was not found strong enough, or brutal enough for such a policy. He was talking absurdly about law and humanity, and he desired to impose strict discipline on his troops. A man with such virtuous qualities was considered unfit for an imperialist job, and hence he was promptly recalled and Lord Lake took his place.

IRELAND AND INDIA

The analogy goes further. At every stage in the Irish history, we meet with incidents and events for which we can find an exact parallel in India. In the above instance we find a proto-type of General Dyer in Lord Lake. That refers to Military. Now let us turn to the civic side. Fitz-William, Governor-General of Ireland, attempted to commit a great crime against Imperialism in making serious efforts to bring about a union between the warring factions. Could there be a greater menace to the solidarity of the Empire which does not rest on one solid foundation but on separate and divided props? He was immediately recalled and replaced by another who could understand his imperial responsibilities better. Was not Lord Ripon, Viceroy of India, punished for similar act of folly, viz., fighting for the rights and equality of Indians and thus bringing his own countrymen to a 'lower' level? Was he not also relieved of his office long before the expiry of his term and considered unfit, like Fitz-William of Ireland, to manage imperial affairs?

These soft-hearts like Abercromby, Fitz-William or Ripons have no place in British politics. They want iron hearts and brutal brains like Lakes and Dyers, or Lloyds.

Even in the Coronation Oath, the British Crown was supposed to be the Defender of the Faith (Protestant) alone, and we believe this religious title and clause continued in the Coronation Oath, till after the death of King Edward when, being considered as scandalous for what was supposed to be one of the most advanced states, that particular clause was sought to be removed, and what an uproar it caused amongst the Protestants, even

some Ulster Protestants going to the length of declaring that this change in the Coronation Oath exempted them from owing any allegiance to the Crown as the king was supposed to be deprived of his most important functions

One rather comic instance will illustrate the point and the absurd length to which their silly sentiments carried them Earl of Chaselmant, a good Protestant Ulsterite, was at one time a great admirer of Gladstone as a great statesman and diplomat When he erected a new grand castle (Roxborough Castle) at Tyrone as his mark of admiration, he erected a marble bust in front of the building and showed the same to his friends and relatives with pride as a mark of his devotion and love for the Grand Old Man of England However his attitude completely changed after Gladstone became the great advocate of Irish Home Rule, which would even partially do some justice to the Catholic majority This fair attitude on the part of his former hero so much enraged the Irish Earl, that he immediately directed the bust to be covered with black tar, and as Gladstone's attitude towards Ireland did not change, he continued the process of tarring the said bust every year Not being content with giving vent to his malicious spleen during his life, in order to secure everlasting "peace to his soul", he left a direction in his Will and last testament that this important ceremony of tarring should continue every year even after the death of the Grand Old Man and made a provision for this annual necessary expenditure Even recent chroniclers report that though the said castle is unoccupied now and is in a dilapidated and ruinous condition, still even a casual observer can notice a black tarred lump in front of ruined castle which attracted the attention of visitors

IRELAND AND INDIA

Our Indian Rajahs are credited with many silly and even idiotic acts, sometimes almost verging on lunacy, but it will be difficult to find an instance that can come up to or beat the record of malicious and wicked eccentricity of this lunatic Irish Protestant Lord

One more episode might be of peculiar interest to Indian readers. It is in connection with that notorious British bully and bluff, Winston Churchill, who so often croaks from a safe distance on Indian questions, but who had to run away like a coward from his Irish opponents. It was in February 1912, when Churchill was the Chief Lord of Admiralty, and as an important member of Cabinet and prominent figure in British politics he was invited to deliver a lecture on the Irish question. The function was arranged to take place in 'Ulster Hall' at Belfast. The Carsonites and Unionists were determined to ban the function and took possession of the Hall two days before the date fixed for the meeting. Churchill was known to be a courageous figure in the British public life, and everyone expected that consistent with the reputation and the high position that he held in the British Cabinet, he would face the hostile crowd and go through the prearranged programme in spite of all the obstacles. But to everybody's disappointment, finding the attitude of the audience distinctly hostile, he beat a hasty retreat, and he thought it safer to take refuge in an obscure corner of a football ground where he hurriedly delivered a message to a small group and departed for England. This grave insult and humiliation was meekly pocketed by the supposed furious and hot-tempered British bull-dog, who can only show his courage and arrogance against Indians from a safe distance of 6000 miles. Nor did the Dublin castle authorities deem it

BOOK I

advisable to interfere in the matter, though such an open and public affront was hurled at an important member of the British Cabinet, and one did not hear even a single question on the subject in the the British Parliament, It is not difficult to imagine what steps Indian Government or British Parliament would have taken to protect or restore their prestige had such an incident happened in India

While in India numerous peasant families in Bardoli and elsewhere had to leave their villages and seek shelter in neighbouring Indian States to escape political persecutions and to evade government revenues, in Ireland hundreds of agriculturists and their families had to leave their hearth and home for good, to escape religious and communal persecutions. The historian records that in one district alone about 1,400 families, mostly peasants, were expelled and driven out of their hearths and homes by a Protestant overlord because they belonged to the opposite creed, viz, Catholicism. Such expulsion was very common, and some of them took refuge in other districts but most of them migrated to other lands in America or colonies

Compare that with the situation in India. Thousands of peasants, either as land-labourers or petty land-holders and tenants, Hindus and Mahomedans, have been working and tilling lands for years past and the only concern of the fat and greedy Zamindars, and landlords, be they Hindus or Mahomedans, is to collect their dues and maintain their margin of profits, absolutely regardless of the fact whether the amounts came from Hindu or Mahomedan tenants or labourers. I do not think there has been a single instance in India of a general ousting

IRELAND AND INDIA

of occupants of land purely on religious or communal grounds. On the other hand, in several Indian States ruled by Hindu or Mahomedan rulers the majority of the population belongs to the other community living in comparative peace and security without any serious complaints of discriminatory treatment. Nay further, in several Mahomedan States the highest offices including that of Prime Minister are held by Hindus and vice-versa. Such a phenomenon would be impossible in Ireland, though there it is not a question of two distinct religions or different faiths, but the rivalry and hostility is between two different sects of the same religion. It is reported that this spirit of rank communalism is so widespread as to affect every sphere of life, every status of society, affecting the highest nobilities, learned professions, all grades of intelligentsia, big commercialists as well as petty traders and hawkers. A tourist records that he was taken aback and quite surprised to hear a Protestant shoe-maker and cobbler hawking his wares for sale in public streets in Belfast shouting at the top of his voice "Strong Kelly's boots, good to trample upon or kick the Papists," and to find a number of Protestants crowding round the fanatic, to buy the Kelly's boots, apparently to use them when opportunity afforded in the way recommended by the hawker. Such an open communal outrage would not be possible in India, perhaps the Kelly's boots would first be tried on the stupid hawker himself, if he ventured his pranks in Bombay streets.

Instances could thus be added *ad infinitum*, covering all spheres and walks of life and including all status and classes of people, to prove that in Christian countries in the West, the religious zeal and fanaticism is much worse than in India, and in all respects the communal

BOOK I

situation and frictions are much more grave and serious there than here. We have not yet touched the Carsonian atrocities and outrages of later days, which prove that the evil, far from being eradicated, was still worse. Yet no die-hard in British Parliament or outside dare suggest that Irish self-rule should be withheld, till this canker of communalism had completely disappeared.

But as stated before, the worst phase of this scandalous situation was the complete pollution of the so-called founts of justice. In the communally tainted Ulster province, as we have remarked before, the Law at one time did not recognise such a "thing" as a Papist, and the mere fact of his being born to that particular faith, automatically made him an outlaw in civil and political affairs. At a later stage, however, in view of the general advancement of progressive ideas and in order to maintain the reputation of being termed civilised, some concession had to be made, but what was denied to them openly and publicly before was now withheld from them under various subterfuges and trickeries, whilst holding out a shadow to make a show in the world. The actual substance was never conceded and the situation from that point of view was, in some respects, worse, whereas the former attitude had at least the redeeming virtue of brutal frankness, the position now taken up was full of hypocrisy and insincerity. The right of franchise and the right to vote, the most elementary right, which was most recently granted to them, evoked a terrible outburst and protest in Protestant quarters, including the Belfast Corporation. The rankest communalist in India on either side, has never denied the elementary or any other civic or political rights of the other, their wrangles being confined to securing safeguards, to prevent

IRELAND AND INDIA

supremacy of one over the other. No institution or organisation, communal, religious or bigotted, so far as we are aware, has ever gone to the length of protesting against the right of franchise and the right to vote to the smallest or the supposed lowest person in status. But the Protestant minority of Ireland, numerically one-third, had the audacity and arrogance to oppose the right of franchise granted to the majority section of their countrymen. This preposterous claim was based on an equally preposterous plea that they belonged to the sect that was the majority and ruling section in the mother country,—England.

As stated before, when it was found impossible to withhold some of the elementary rights from the Catholics so as to satisfy the public opinion of the world, at least a show of equality and justice had to be maintained. At the same time secret instructions were issued to defeat this object. The police often looked on as mere spectators when cruel atrocities were perpetrated on the Catholics in public streets. Magistrates had secret instructions to have the same object in view when administering justice, so as to evoke a pertinent and forceful remark from that famous Irish patriot Grattan, viz, "Laws were made and administered in the worst spirit of lawlessness," just as the National Congress had often to describe so many measures as "Lawless laws" or "Black Acts". In many cases the Protestant law-breakers got off scot-free on the strange plea of "conscientious objectors" which evoked a remark even from Asquith that "possession of a conscience and a repugnance to obey inconsistent and repugnant laws is not the monopoly only of the Protestants of North-East of Ireland". Some of the penalties, described in the

BOOK I

"Irish History and Chronicles of Events" of the period were hanging, picketing, i.e., suspending by one arm so that the whole weight of the body fell on one bare foot which was forced to rest on a sharpened stake,—pitch-cap, a bag filled with some hot boiling liquid stuff turned over the head and made to wear like a cap,—resulting in terrible scalping and burning of the victim, house-burnings with the inmates inside and wholesale massacres of people including women and children

Although we can add numerous instances, betraying the same attitude, tendency and policy, we will reserve the same for the later discussion on Carsonism. We will close this topic for the present with one remarkable quotation giving a true picture of the disgraceful and scandalous state to which "Law and Order" and "Administration of Justice" had degraded Judge Fletcher, who had acquired a great reputation for impartiality and independence, even in the dark days in Ulster Ireland, addressing a grand jury in a communal trial, so late as 1914 uttered these remarkable words—

"I belong to no party. The societies called 'Orange Societies' (Protestant Communal Societies) have produced most mischievous effects, particularly in North of Ireland. They poison the very foundation of justice, and even some magistrates, under their influence, have in too many cases violated their duties and their oaths. Of this I am certain that so long as these associations are permitted to act in the lawless manner they do, there will be no 'tranquility' in this country and particularly in the North of Ireland. These disturbers of public peace who assume the name of 'Orangemen' frequent the fairs and markets with arms in their hands, under the pretence of self-defence, or of

IRELAND AND INDIA

protecting the public peace, but with lurking views of inviting attacks, confident that armed as they were, they can overcome the defenceless opponents and put them down. Oaths administered in Courts of Justice are set at naught. Oaths of 'Orangemen' and 'Robmen' are obligatory. 'Gentlemen of the jury, I am an Orangeman and therefore acquit me' Such are the pretenders of loyalty, many of whom I have seen perpetrating incalculable mischief. It is not their interest that the country should be peaceful. Their loyalty is a sea of troubled waters."

Another Irish Judge, Mr Shaw, says in the same strain

"Picture to yourself an Irish Court of Justice. An Orangeman is indicted. In the jury-box twelve Orangemen are placed. The magistrates are members of the same fatal fraternity. Under such circumstances what a mockery is the administration of Justice?"

In India, magistrates, judiciary and even juries, Hindus or Muslims, particularly in matters communal, make special endeavours to be strictly fair and impartial, to avoid misunderstandings or misapprehensions in the minds of parties of the opposite sect, and no High Court Judge in India, European or Indian, ever had an occasion to pass such a slashing indictment in connection with communal cases.

About the time when deplorable communal riots were going on in the city of Bombay about the middle of 1932, we came across, in a book on Irish history a description of similar riots in Belfast some years ago. The two accounts, one in the current events' column in the press and the other as recorded in the book, appeared so similar

BOOK I

that we feel tempted to reproduce the Belfast account for the information of Indian readers The author writes —

"I remember vividly my first visit to Belfast A faction-fight that had lasted for weeks was flickering out, and my introduction was sufficiently thrilling Policemen with rifles and revolvers were massed in every corner of the streets In some of the danger zones we sighted tired infantry in companies dozing on pavements, and we passed a detachment of Lancers escorting a mob of dishevelled prisoners, some of whom were tied to the stirrup-leathers of troopers They used to say 'Our poetry is blood, cut an Orangeman and you will find orange-coloured blood in him' These faction fighters do not consider themselves bad citizens or disturbers of peace Streets divide the Protestants from the Catholics. Paving stones, porter bottles, sticks, bars, knives and iron-nuts serve as instruments of attacks Youngsters are told tales of the traditions of either sect, so that they vow that when they grow up to be citizens, they will add to the reputation of their sect for bigotry and fanaticism In public, respectable folks deplore these 'outbreaks', in private, it is rare to find any who do not back one side or another. Fighters when reprimanded, retort, that they are not 'arm-chair' politicians, hence must take an active part by participating in the actual fights "

Such are the impressions of a visitor to the capital city of Ulster, not an occasional rare sight as in India but one of frequent recurrence and very long duration The visitor would not notice the redeeming features as in Bombay and other Indian cities, such as respectable and responsible citizens of both communities forming themselves into peace-committees making earnest endeavours to restore peace, harmony and order Nor will

IRELAND AND INDIA

he find such a scandalous state of affairs in public bodies like the municipal Corporation, openly expressing prejudiced and biased views, nor such mockery or distortion of justice at least in communal cases as referred to above. The situation in Indian towns from all points of view is decidedly better than in the supposed more civilised and more progressive white Christian towns of the West and the European population, both Catholics and Protestants, here as well as in their own countries, would be better occupied, in attempting to improve their own people and institutions, rather than preach sermons to Indians, advising them to restore communal harmony and unity before aspiring for Swaraj.

The real causes for the troubles, both in Ireland as well as in India, will be found elsewhere. An Irish patriot very correctly remarked —

“ The British are to the ‘ Orangemen ’ what a dynamite is to a detonator ”

Bureaucratic brains are always very fertile and resourceful. When they are cornered in one place, they will find some other subterfuge to fall back upon rather than honestly and frankly give up their case. Finding that the plea of intercommunal disruption is not strong and plausible enough to serve their sinister purpose, as both ancient history as well as current events of all colonies and Christian countries, particularly of Ireland, demonstrably prove the contrary fact, viz., that all these countries are at present enjoying self-government and self-determination in spite of bitter religious quarrels and sectional fights,—the communal friction lessens with the growth of real political power,—they will at once try to search for some other pleas, some other grounds on which

BOOK I

they could base their arguments and denials with better justification with greater plausibility and less apparent hypocrisy "But Oh!" croaks old Churchill and company, "it is not only a question of friction between Hindus and Mahomedans alone We cannot deny that similar and perhaps, worse conditions existed and still exist even in our 'Divine' countries, amongst God's favourite people, the benighted Christians We must admit that old rancour between Saxons and Celts, Catholics and Protestants, has not yet died out and Democracy reigns supreme in spite of these bitter feuds and faction fights. But in India the situation is worsened by the additional circumstance of so many castes and sub-sects in both the great communities, with conflicting interests and clashing claims, the Shiabs and the Sunnies, the Brahmins and the Non-Brahmins, the Depressed Class and the so-called higher but equally oppressed class, with customs and habits both social and religious, so different and varying as to make it impossible to unify them into one nation Perhaps the two main divisions can be managed as we do in Western countries, but the problem is how to adjust so many conflicting claims and notions" So if the first plea does not count, the second argument is, they think, incontrovertible, and must effectively serve their object and delay the achievement of Indian goal The Tory thinks he has scored this time There could be no satisfactory explanation or reply to this apparently ingenuous and plausible argument, but unfortunately for him, a little closer study of the inner life of some Western Christian Countries discloses a system of social condition that comes very near to the much discredited, because of being much misunderstood, caste-system in India. Not that we have any desire to defend that pernicious

IRELAND AND INDIA

system Would to God, that we had the capacity or power to abolish, with one stroke of the pen, the artificial, unjust and inequitable barriers, that divide or separate, man from man, but for the present we are concerned to meet the British die-hard argument against Indian "Swaraj" and try to prove from their own records that even in this respect, there is not much difference between the so-called civilised and advanced countries in the West and the dominated countries in the East like India. It is a known fact, that besides the two main branches, the Catholics and the Protestants, there are numerous sub-sections and sub-divisions, all based on varying degrees of religious faiths and different creeds and beliefs, and their sub-heads are again split up into so many clans resembling numerous castes and panchayat systems in India, each with certain characteristics and habits and customs peculiar to itself and differing from the rest, but what is worse still, uptil very recently, and even in modern times, each constantly warring against the other. Some times these clanish feuds are so serious as to resemble petty village campaigns resulting in casualties and bloodshed. They are also territorially divided, and members of one clan cannot trespass upon the lands of another without risking their lives and limbs. We have chosen to restrict to the instances of Ireland alone, as furnishing the nearest parallel to India, according to Barnie, in North Tipperary in Ireland uptil a few years ago the following clans and religious factions existed, Ruskavallas and Caffees, Dingens and Dawsons, Cummines and Darrigs, Bootashas and Bogbay and Tubblers and scores of others. Most of the modern names are derived from these original clanish titles. For instance, Bootashas are the modern O' Briens.

BOOK I

Tubblers are the Haggans, Bogbays are the Kennedys of to-day. There were others, perhaps Scotch, who verged on the border of atheism and did not believe in the existence of God. Their motto was "God be d d". That was abbreviated into Godams, and some believe that the modern Gordons are the descendants of these atheist ancestors. No wonder we find so many Gordons in the Indian Police force (with due apologies to those descendants today who are not true to their ancestors and who still attend Sunday Services though retaining the anti-God family title).

Even upto recently, particularly in Irish villages, friction and fights were going on between different clans and factions, particularly when they clashed at market-places and fairs, sometimes a big blaze arising from a most trivial and absurd cause. Each clan had also its headman like the Caste-Patels in India, and the description of their day-to-day life reads very much like Indian caste systems. The headman exercised certain authority over his clan, just like a village Patil in India, and the internal disputes and affairs were settled by a committee, just like the Panchayat in India, though the system in India, seems to be much more ancient and much better organised and systematised than in any other country in the West. Thus we see that even the primitive caste systems of India will not help our enemies much in their sinister attempts to make out a case for continuation of foreign domination or self-imposed trusteeship, because in the Western countries where democracy and self-rule are established, not only similar systems existed, but with the advance of political power and civic responsibility, these systems gradually disappeared, and the various clans

IRELAND AND INDIA

and factions, originally based on religious differences, gradually assimilated themselves into separate economic or political parties as in Ireland. The appearance of common danger and the imposition of outside control like the Land-acts and the exploitation by landlords and capitalists gradually led them to form themselves into classes as tenants or agriculturists against landlords or revenue-collectors. Even in India today, particularly in the provinces like Bengal and U P where old Zamindari systems are still prevailing, the villagers are forgetting their old differences due to religious castes or creeds, and are forming into a new class of tenants, united to resist the onslaught of the common enemy, the zamindars and rent or revenue collectors. Thus a common danger common suffering and common interests are great unifying factors, and there is no doubt that with the political and economic awakening, that is fast approaching even in Indian villages, the rigors of the old caste systems will considerably lessen, though perhaps the system may continue long for social and other non-political purposes.

Referring to the faction fights in villages and communal riots in cities in Ireland, Lord Drumond, giving evidence before a committee of the House of Lords, frankly stated that the policy was to withdraw the police out of sight and leave the people to fight amongst themselves, and Sir G. G. Lewis, connected with Irish administration, also confessed that "at one time the local authorities encouraged faction fights". The underlying motive was the same everywhere, to make the task of landlords, capitalists and administrators much easier and make the common people less resisting to their profiteering and exploitation.

BOOK I

Thus the Irish example explodes even this plea, and they cannot resist the Indian claims on such slender and slippery arguments that cut both way, the examples of other countries, rather prove, that the only way to kill the communal canker and to get rid of pernicious caste systems, is to give real political power to the people, the actual substance and not the mere shadow, so that with the assumption of genuine power and responsibility, the barriers automatically break and disappear and are replaced by new classes and divisions based on different political or economic outlook or political mentality. In other words, communal and caste factions must give way to political parties in a true and genuine democracy based on absolute adult franchise and full responsibility. On the other hand, a bogus democracy, a shadowy power withholding the real substance, is bound to encourage and create non-political, communal and faction spirit. In all the countries in Europe, where in the days of absolute monarchy a few years ago, religious feuds and factions existed between Catholics and Protestants and dozens of sub-sects of the two main branches, today on the transfer of political power to the people, political parties have cropped up, entirely displacing the old religious communities and clans. The new labels are, Republicans, Monarchists, Socialists, Communists, Democrats, Nationalists, Constitutionalists, Fascists, Nazis, Conservatives, Liberals, Labourites and score of others. Very rarely and in exceptional cases a party bears a communal label like the Catholics, still surviving till recently in Germany, though in some places the religious and communal tinge has not entirely disappeared, still in most cases these divisions are based on fundamental political creeds or programme, composed mostly of mixed

IRELAND AND INDIA

members of all creeds and communities So also in the Eastern countries like Turkey and China, neither the Khalifa nor the Emperor are now looked upon as heaven-born celestial beings since the transfer of the power to the people and establishment of real national governments The whole original structure based on religious foundation and supported by religious parties and factions has disappeared, and the Khalifatists or Manchus or Chows worshippers have been converted into either nationalists, republicans, democrats or such other political parties

But the most remarkable modern instance is perhaps of Russia A country and people most religious-ridden and superstitious, most intolerant and bigotted in religious matters during the days of absolute and most arbitrary monarchy of the Czar, immediately on the transfer of complete power to the people, have gone to the opposite extreme, and all the religious zeal, fanaticism and bigotry, is now converted into so much enthusiasm devotion and love for the country and for the political creed of the communist party Were not the Jews and other non-Christian communities, most ruthlessly persecuted in the Czarist Russia only a few years ago, and are not the Jews and the Mohomedans and members of all religions and castes now capable of holding highest places of responsibility and position in the Soviet Russia today? Thus a wonderful transformation is brought about by the transference of real political power to the people so that in less than a generation the most fanatical and god-ridden, but politically the most backward country in the world, has, immediately on the change in the system of government, become the most god-less, but politically and even economically, the most advanced

BOOK I

country in the world today There is no reason to doubt that the same phenomenon will take place in India, provided that the transfer of political power and responsibilities is as complete and genuine as in other countries in the world

Thus floored, the enemy of Indian advance, still, will not so easily give up this futile and selfish game What about the illiteracy, the grotesque and absurd customs and habits, some of the ancient ridiculous, so-called, religious practices still surviving and creating an impression, upon an outsider or a visitor, of relics of barbarism, that are not yet killed by advancing civilisation and progress ?

Once, whilst accompanying a batch of European tourists on the Chowpatty shores in Bombay, we came across a sight which is common to Indians both in cities and villages, but which seemed to shock our visitors A group of fifty or sixty Hindus of the working or labouring class, in a very excited state was leading two or three women in a trance, with dishevelled hair and sparsely clothed, to the sea-shore, evidently to appease a deity (of small-pox ?) by performing some ceremony and chanting some hymns on the shore There was no doubt a good deal of noise made by tom-toms, tambourines, clapping of hands and recital of hymns, and the women in the centre of the crowd were skipping along at a dancing pace, apparently regardless either of the traffic or spectators that crowded the streets Perhaps such a sight may appear a little extraordinary or grotesque to strangers, and our European companions, naturally watched the procession, in great bewilderment and amazement Then one of them remarked, " Don't you think your country

IRELAND AND INDIA

ought to be rid of such superstitions and prejudices before she claims self-determination or self-rule, and does this not betray extreme illiteracy and backward state rendering the people unfit to enjoy political rights, based on franchise responsibility?" It was the same old argument, viz, social and religious reforms before the grant of political power. We explained to them that though these pranks appeared to us to be senseless and silly still they were quite innocent and harmless. However that could not and should not come in the way of our enjoying elementary political rights, as the exercise of one had nothing in common with the indulgence in another. Unfortunately at that time we could not give a more effective and slashing reply, because it was some time after that I came across a passage in a book on Irish religious customs and habits, describing exactly similar ceremonies practised by lower class of Irish people not very many years ago. Rev Magill, in his book called "The Home Life of Ireland", gives a vivid description of what is known as the "Revival of 185" It was a fanatic craze that did not affect individuals here and there as in India, but at certain intervals the whole section of the population was affected, converting the whole area into certain types of lunatic asylums. The Rev gentleman proceeds in his vivid description and states —

"During the period of the spiritual trance of infection when some people were supposed to be 'seized' or 'struck' by the Devil, all labour in the affected area was suspended, houses were vacant, large number of people of both sexes and all ages proceeded in sombre processions to graveyards or river-banks or others mystic abodes, singing aloud, chanting hymns, praying, clapping hands, some lying

BOOK I

prostrate as if in trance, some falling on their friends, some lying on ground sinking in a swoon, some rushing about aimlessly trying to flee and raising loud senseless cries, some trembling and some even weeping. Some during this affected period remained in a death-like sleep for hours together. Several people would offer prayers and sacrifices, praying for this visitation to them, and would be sorely disappointed, if their prayers were not granted, and they were not 'struck' by the Devil. Worst of all, several young girls were infected by the spell, with the result that these repeated violent exertions and exhaustions seriously affected their health and ruined their careers, often rendering them unfit for any work for months. The priests encouraged these superstitious beliefs, and probably made some profit out of this sentimental outburst."

Another writer on the same subject Stopford in his "Work and Counterwork", says that he had seen such scenes not only in Ireland but certain parts of England and Scotch villagers were also considered to be extremely superstitious, and prone to many such deviling tricks. Probably with the advance of education and with social progress, this hold of the 'spirits' and "devils" through the priests has relapsed, and the scenes are not so frequent or so wide-spread as before. But the point is that superficial European tourists and visitors should not draw hasty conclusions against India by observance of some unusual sights here and there, that appear primitive or grotesque. All the countries in the world, including the most civilised and advanced in the West, have suffered or are still suffering from the same spell, but nowhere have these superstitious and sentimental outbursts been used as arguments against political freedom of the whole nation

IRELAND AND INDIA

As we have seen in one instance above, the Christian people usually go to greater extremes than the milder and more docile inhabitants of the East, but as in the case of different castes, so in the indulgence of such pranks in the name of religion, the supposed defects of the Indians are always brought to light more prominently and secure a wider publicity. This is partly due to the fact that a certain section is always interested in discovering these so-called "Defects" and giving them as wide a publicity as possible for propaganda purposes.

As regards literacy, no doubt the proportion in India is lower than in almost all the countries in the West, but that furnishes a much stronger condemnation of the British rule and a much more cogent reason for immediate grant of self-government than otherwise. What a foreign rule has not been able to accomplish in 150 years, the self-governing system will achieve in less than 15 years. In that respect the example of Russia is most pertinent, being also the most recent. The illiteracy in the Russian masses, during centuries of Czarist irresponsible, autocratic rule was appalling, perhaps worse than India, still these illiterate people, once roused, were intelligent enough to understand their own interest, so as to help the small body of communists to overthrow Czardom, and what the Czarist regime had not accomplished for centuries, the people's government achieved in less than a generation, and in less than 15 years' of the Soviet rule, literacy had spread in the remotest corners and villages, so that within the next few years almost cent percent of the Russian population will be literate. This wonderful and glorious success, without appreciable additional burden on the people, became possible because it is only in self-government that people

BOOK I

can obtain considerable amount of voluntary and free national service, particularly for nation-building departments, and in India we feel confident that a very large band of voluntary workers will be available for free service to the masses as soon as real political power is transferred to the people, and after that goal is reached in the matters of education, medical relief, industrial development and agricultural improvements and relief, India will astound the world with a phenomenon more wonderful and more glorious than even Russia or any other country in the world

Mr Ramsay MacDonald only a few years ago, as the leader of the Labour Party, was struggling against the vested interests in his own country,—the Conservatives and the Liberals, who were anxious to keep him and his Labour Party out of power, as he is anxious to-day to keep India out of it. The arguments used by his opponents against him, were in some respects similar to what he uses against us to-day. The Labour Party, they said, was not yet well organised, considering that it represented very lowest fraction of the people, and that almost all of its members, belonging to labouring class, were uneducated and illiterate, and therefore the Party was unfit to assume responsibility of government. How curious is it that Ramsay MacDonald, as the head of the Labour Party, only a few years ago, had to meet the same objections and argument that he, as the head of the Coalition-Government, hurls against the Congress to-day? May we not with same force and justification hurl back at him, and at the nation and country he represents, the same epithets, the same replies and explanations, that he used when he laboured to make out a case for his Labour Party? In this connection a

IRELAND AND INDIA

reference may be made to his not very old publication, "Socialism, Critical and Constructive" His first argument, reading between the lines, is that a party or individual in long possession and enjoyment of power, never likes to be deprived of it, and seeks various pretexts and excuses, to retain this power and deprive his opponents of acquiring the same Condemning all monopolies, and referring particularly to land monopolies enjoyed by British colonies in Africa and other possessions, he says —

*"The history of land monopoly is devoid both of honour and honesty, a record of theft or appropriation by legal means"**

Perhaps no President of the Indian national Congress from the Congress platform, condemned the attitude of vested interests and British monopolists in such unequivocal and strong terms In one sentence the Prime-Minister of England has described correctly and succinctly the history of British acquisition and building of British Empire

When an Indian agitator describes British Imperialism as a legalised system of "loot", Sec 124 A promptly comes into action and the victim is straight away marched to a British prison for maligning and scandalising the "Divine, God-sent" Empire over which the Sun never sets Inscrutable and mystic are the ways of British justice !

Let us proceed further Stoutly refuting the other and the most important argument against his Labour

* pp 153-154.

BOOK I

Party, viz illiteracy and numerical weakness, paucity of membership &c, the Prime-Minister says —

" It is not necessary that a majority, or even a fairly good number of members of a party should be educated or literate in order to qualify a party to assume responsibility. It is enough, if a small group amongst them is intelligent and educated enough, capable and fit to conduct the affairs of government "

He defiantly challenges his opponents to prove that such a group of highly intelligent and educated individuals does not exist in his Labour Party, reckoning himself as the tallest poppy, more than a match for any one of his opponents

Has the Prime Minister any doubt about the existence of a large section of intelligentia in India highly cultured, educated and in every respect fit and fully qualified to assume responsibility of government of their own country? Then the argument or plea of illiteracy of a vast majority of masses is, according to the Prime Minister's own opinion, quite irrelevant and impertinent. Perhaps the modern history of Europe does not furnish another such a glaring example of a duplicity in the same individual, such a complete somersault with a volte-face in such a short time,—Mr MacDonald, the leader of the Labour Party, struggling against vested interests in his own country, struggling for justice, equity and fair-play for his Labour Party, and Mr MacDonald, the Prime-Minister of National Government, trying to suppress the same aspirations in the Indians and adopting the same arguments used by his opponents which he had to refute when applied against himself. The Labour leader victim has now become the arch-oppressor, making

IRELAND AND INDIA

hypocritical attempts to justify and even commend those tyrannical measures which only recently he severely condemned when applied in a much milder form against himself and his party. Never was the description, "A quick-change artist" more appropriately applied to a diplomat or statesman in European politics!

Let the critics of the Indian National Congress point out another political institution or organisation, either in this country or any other part of the world that wields such tremendous influence, has such a wonderful hold, and possesses such a great power over vast areas and large and cosmos population, including the stalwart physical giants, the Pathans of the North-West Frontier, the timid but tenacious and small-built Gujerathis, the impulsive and sentimental Bengalis, the quick-tempered but frank South-Indians, the orthodox Brahmins as well as atheists, the militant Sikhs and the fire-worshipping Parsees,—all shades of human nature, all varieties of human temperament, representing different psychologies and different mentalities, thousands of different species of humanity, separated by hundreds of miles, such as Abdul Gaffar Khan from North-West Frontier and Rev Ottama from Burmah, experiencing different climes, the wealthy merchants from palaces as well as the almost starving peasants from huts, all combined under the common banner of Indian National Congress. More wonderful it is that all this power, influence and control is wielded by the Indian National Congress, over millions of people and thousands of acres, without a single destructive weapon and without possessing a single armed-soldier! That is phenomenon not yet witnessed in any other part of the world, not yet recorded in the political history of any other country or nation. There have been many instances

both in modern as well as ancient political history, where a small political party, whose membership did not exceed one or two per cent of the total population, possessed great power and exercised great influence over the whole nation. The Communist Party of Russia, the only political party responsible both for successful revolutions and establishment of subsequent administration, did not, even at its highest pitch, possess membership of more than one per cent of the peasantry or two or three per cent of the working class population of Russia. Numerically its strength was insignificant, but it was a small, compact, well-organised and strictly disciplined body, with mentality highly militant and revolutionary. Though the membership was confined to a few, because many people were not prepared to pass through the severe rigours and strict discipline that the party imposed, still a large majority outside the actual party, sympathised with its aims and objects, and co-operated in the execution of its programme. So also Kuomintang in China started with a modest beginning, consisting at first of Sun-Yet-Sen and his few college companions, and even in later days when it became the most active political organisation in China, mainly responsible for the revolution and the establishment of Chinese Republic, its actual membership was confined comparatively to a few, considering the total population of 400 lakhs of Chinese. The Fascist party in Italy only two or three years before it came in power, was an unpopular body in that country, and the present all powerful and universally acknowledged Dictator, Sgr Mussolini was, shortly before he assumed power, ignominiously defeated with his few followers at the polls in Milan, his opponents, the Socialists, capturing most of the seats. The history of the progress and development of

IRELAND AND INDIA

Sinn Fein and Republican party in Ireland records many instances when only a year or two before the Easter Rebellion in 1916 the party was so unpopular even at their head-quarters in Dublin that the volunteers and workers were hissed and hooted in public meetings, and even pelted with stones and other missiles from the windows, when they marched through the streets. Many of the citizens helped the police to suppress and capture them, till within three or four years the position was so completely reversed that there was hardly a soul in the whole area who was not a secret sympathiser with the movement and the Dublin Castle authorities were completely isolated. The reason for this transformation will be noted later. Here we only wish to emphasise, that a political party need not be numerically strong so far as actual membership is concerned. Influence and strength grows with the power. All that is needed is that at a certain stage, that party must secure a large following and sympathisers and even non-combatant followers, otherwise it will be difficult for it to survive the hostile attack. Perhaps the position of the Indian National Congress is better and even more secure, in respect of both the actual membership as well as general following, than any of the modern political parties, including Wafdists in Egypt, that have played such a prominent part in political upheavals in different parts of the world. But there is one circumstance that places the Indian Congress on a higher moral pedestal than all the other political and revolutionary organisations in the world. Whereas all the other groups depended, like their opponents, on the armed forces and regular armoury for their 'sanction,' the Indian National Congress alone

BOOK I

relies on the justice and righteousness of her cause and is carrying on a mighty struggle, relying only upon moral soul force the other countries employed terrorist methods, not only against their enemies but also against their erstwhile friends and followers. In Ireland and elsewhere treason against the country was treated as a more serious crime than sedition against the State, and a traitor to the cause was summarily shot at sight, by the party members. There was besides a regular code of penalties ranging from expulsion from parties to capital punishment for various offences against the cause and the country. In India the only penalty imposed is public exposure followed in extreme cases by social or commercial boycott. In that respect the Indian political struggle is a most wonderful political phenomenon and the Indian National Congress is a most unique political organisation in the world.

This is as it should be. As India, from many points of view, is a different world, so also her Premier Political Organisation, should adopt, and follow different methods and creeds. Harmsworth's "History of the World," a standard work, after making a historical survey of the world, refers to India in following terms—"But the glare of China must pale before the art, science, history, philosophy of India and its magnificent physical endowments. . . India should be placed first in the list of the world's countries, for she is almost certainly the Birth-place of 'Man'." This casts a great responsibility on her political leaders, to secure her emancipation in such a way, as not to transform in the course of struggle, this wonderful ancient treasure-land into a barren desert.

CHAPTER V

‘INDIA AND IRELAND’

‘CARSONISM’

In all these tragic political dramas in various parts of the Empire, enacted to serve imperial purposes, regardless of the disasters they spread in the original countries, there is always a prominent figure on the stage, an actor who is often rehearsed on the Westminster Parliamentary stage

In the Anglo-Irish drama, in the beginning of the twentieth century, Sir Edward Carson played that double role admirably well, one foot in Westminster and another in Ulster, a political mountebank now appearing in the divine garb of a religious preacher, now in the glittering uniform of a military commander, a perplexing personality, astounding both to Irishmen and Britishers alike, and amazing the world at large. Public men in various countries have often occupied a double role, there are numerous instances where leaders rotting in cells and condemned to the gallows, have suddenly found themselves installed as heads of government, but none of them has performed the extraordinary Carsonian feat of holding the double rank of a rebel leader and an important member of the cabinet, with a responsible and honourable position in the judiciary, both these extremely inconsistent and irreconcilable positions simultaneously and at the same time. He would very often leave his important ministerial duty in England to proceed to Ulster to give some directions to his rebel army to indulge in some fresh outrage and disorder. Somehow or other with the help of the devil or by the grace of god, god or

devil alone knows, by what process such problematic and hydia-headed personalities are always discovered or moulded at critical juncture in the histories of all the three unfortunate countries. It is a god-sent or devil-inspired Moulana or Pandit to play these special parts in mystic India, or some obstruse Pasha suddenly brought to lime-light as if emerging from the ancient pyramids to "rescue" the land of the Khedives and "gallant knights of the Garter" of Carsonian type, a modern Messiah to play the role of the "Defender of the Faith."

Though it must be admitted that the religious feuds in Ireland, as in other Christian countries in the West, were centuries old, long, long before Carson saw the first dawn on the British horizon, and hence in fairness, he cannot be blamed for the existing conditions in Ireland, still the responsibility for aggravating and continuing it uptil date, is certainly his. During and immediately after the War, the comradeship and the closer association, acquired by Irishmen of both the creeds in the trenches of France, went a long way to broaden their outlook and deaden their fanatic zeal, and, if on their return to Ireland they had not been again led into worse religious dug-outs by unpatriotic and short-sighted leaders of the Carsonian type, perhaps the situation in Ireland would have been much smother to-day. Besides, the persistent zeal and labour of patriotic leaders of the type of Wolfetone, Grattan, Parnell and O' Donnell had produced some effect; particularly the words of the Great Irish orator constantly dinned into the Irish ears, like the memorable words of Abraham Lincoln uttered during the American Civil War for Emancipation of Slaves, are pertinent. He used to declare, "Irish Protestants could never be free till Irish Catholics had ceased to be slaves," in the same way

INDIA AND IRELAND

as Lincoln declared, "a nation or country cannot be half a slave and half free" The same historical words may be repeated to-day in respect of India The so-called self-government for British India is futile, so long as millions of their brethren in the Indian States, continue under the autocratic thralldom of petty or big magnates Wolfe Tone always reminded the Irish that 'the never-failing source of Irish trouble is England,' and Grattan's description "Law-making in the spirit of Law-breaking" applies appropriately to India and Egypt even to-day In vain did Parnell appeal to and plead with the masses, "Let your tyrannical leaders join in hate, will you (the masses) not join in love?" Is that much different from our appeal to Indian masses? Let the selfish and self-seeking leaders wrangle and squabble for the loaves and fishes but let the millions of peasantry and workers, poverty-stricken and toiling, work arm-in-arm together as ever before, both cemented, by the great unifying factors, of poverty, distress, hunger and want So-called Religion has been the bane and curse in India as in Ireland When the national leaders made commendable efforts to bring about union, their great enemies, both of divinity and humanity, the ecclesiastical preachers in Ireland, constantly preached and sermonised to the susceptible people, warning them against the impending danger and disaster, both to their physical and spiritual existence, that would result through union They openly preached in this strain converting the places of worship into publicity and propaganda departments for political parties They said that "the worst of the nationalist policy is that it seeks to unite Catholics with Protestants when that happens, good-bye to British Interests in Ireland" Even the highest judicial tribunal, the High Courts, held inter-

BOOK I

marriages between Catholics and Protestants as illegal and void, apprehending that their family bonds and ties may ultimately lead to national unity

Are not similar deplorable scenes noticed in India even to-day when a bigotted "Sanatanist" or a fanatical "Moulvi," forgetting his divine and holy mission, abuses his influence with the flock, by preaching anti-national sermons, inciting class and racial animosities ?

When Carson came upon the scene, with his shrewdness, he touched on this weak spot in Irish public life. He felt that in order to achieve success in his unpatriotic and anti-nationalist mission, he must rely, as his predecessors, on the religious susceptibilities and sentiments of the people. No appeal or plea will pierce their hearts or capture their imagination so much, as in the name of Church or Christ, and hence his natural prop and pillar, to support him in this shameful and hypocritical drama, were the prelates and preachers of the Protestant churches, whereas we in India, before joining volunteer ranks a recruit took an oath of national service by self-suffering and sacrifice, a purely patriotic undertaking based on love, equality and justice, Carson's first act of public service was a pledge and covenant, purely religious, calling upon the people to uphold and preserve separate communal, sectional rights at all costs, opposing union of Ireland, and as the Home Rule Bill tended towards that end, to wreck it at all costs, even sacrificing their and their opponents' lives. It is only necessary to compare and contrast the two drafts of oaths—the satyagraha pledge in India and the anti-Home Rule covenant in Ireland,—and the fundamental difference in the two movements becomes quite apparent. One stands for unity and harmony of the

INDIA AND IRELAND

nation and country, the other for widening the breach between the North and the South India clamours for complete independence and separation from England, Ulster demanded union with England India preaches non-violence, love and truth, Ulster thirsted for blood, hatred and revenge The Indian National Congress preaches equality of religion and freedom of conscience making a special provision for them in the Fundamental Rights, the Carsonites' principle plank was religious monopoly and superior status The Congress worked for natural democracy, the rule of the majority with safeguards for all, the Carsonites' strong plea was for the rule of the Protestant minority over the Catholic majority, its firm refusal to submit to the most elementary principles of modern democracy Thus Gandhism and Carsonism were as poles apart

Consistently with this policy and aim, the pledge ceremony in Ulster was performed with great pomp and grandeur, as if it were a devout religious ceremony There was a special function arranged, and in the presence of a large and representative gathering Carson first put his signature on the covenant, solemnly undertaking to preserve their religious superiority and oppose Home Rule and union One theatrical gentleman, further to strike the imagination and to create a sensation in the crowd extracted some drops of blood from his body and signed the pledge with his own blood There have been some instances in history, where similar enthusiasm has been displayed at a patriotic pledge-taking ceremony Dr Sun-Yat-Sen, after the establishment of Chinese Republic, first put his signature to an oath pledging himself to maintain and preserve it at the cost of his life, and called upon his Republican followers to do the same The

BOOK I

Communists in Russia and the Fascists in Italy observed similar ceremonies with equal or greater earnestness and seriousness. But in all these cases their enthusiasm and devotion was for a national democratic cause, for freedom according to their own light and understanding. Caissonian pledge was perhaps the only instance where so much enthusiasm and zeal were wasted for a wrong and retrograde cause. Pursuant to this oath, the Ulsterites were described as Covenanters, and the question of Home Rule with most people became not a political but a religious question. To make a compromise on that issue would be violating the sacred pledge, and priests and preachers threatened that such a violation would involve wrath of God, on the people and the country. Thus the theory of the 'chosen people of God' was fostered and continued furnishing the strongest argument and plea for not submitting to the ordinary rule of democracy and majority.

One newspaper remarked that "if you cut them, they will bleed orange," and another described that "Ulster through Carson had entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with the Deity." Some Christian critics appropriately described their fanaticism as intense and senseless, as that of the Gazi tribes of the Frontier or Wild West African Negroes. When the Home Rule Bill had to be suspended on account of the Great War, the preachers declared most brazen-facedly, that it was an act of God to help Ulster's cause. To what depths and brutal length did the religious bias carry them, to make them believe that God had deliberately created terrible war involving loss of millions of lives and inflicting untold misery and distress, simply to rescue a small batch of Christian people in Ulster from the "Disaster" and "calamities" of Home Rule? As we will note later, this mis-

INDIA AND IRELAND

chievous and misguided propaganda, started by a few interested timeservers and backed by unscrupulous and sinful religious preachers, led to terrible and wide-spread national disaster in Ireland, the effects of which are still felt by modern generation. The gulf and the breach was so widened as almost to make it permanent and unbridgeable, and has divided the small and unfortunate country into two separate and isolated compartments, resulting in loss and detriment to both. Let India beware. Let her not play upon religious sentiment and susceptibilities of a section of her people. Let them be warned against the mischievous and criminal activities of the few exploiters. It was deplorable to note that at a certain stage of the communal tension, there were oaths and pledges on sacred scriptures, very much similar to the Covenant in Ireland. Religion and god if to be invoked at all, in politics, they can be invoked only to help the national and patriotic cause, for national unity and national emancipation, for greater harmony and love between various races and communities. To invoke divine aid for other satanic purposes, would be worse than devil made to quote Scriptures.

As in Ireland, so in India it has been rightly maintained that if the masses of both communities were left alone, without guidance, or rather misguidance, of so called communal leaders on either side, the communal problem in both countries would have been long solved to the entire satisfaction of both, resulting in great advancement to the national cause. In Ireland, particularly after the free and close fraternisation of both "Redmondites" and "Carsonites" on the battle-fields of France, there would have been no trace of bitterness or racial animosity left, had not the old fire been re-kindled by

BOOK I

time-servers and self-seekers, on their return to the country. As a Nationalist remarked, "they (the war-retained soldiers) are the lads who won't leave an Irishman in the lurch, no matter where he hangs his hat on Sunday" *i.e.* no matter what church he attends on Sunday. The same may be said with equal truth about the youth and the masses in India. There was one dramatic and picturesque figure in Ireland, shortly before Carson's ascendancy, who could have brought about the desired results, had he lived to face and oppose, in the same period. That was Mr John Redmond, an eminent member of the Irish Bar, though a resident of Belfast, and territorially, an Ulsterite, he possessed and advocated most liberal and national views, calling himself an Irishman first and last, neither belonging to one sect nor another, he styled himself "Orange-Fiannian Attorney-General," thus attempting to amalgamate the opposite factions in one name. He flew both colours from his office windows, attended meetings and functions of both parties, slashing and condemning leaders on both sides as occasion demanded, his one aim being to get rid of British supremacy. Being a great orator and of a most affable disposition, he commanded for the time being great influence, particularly with the youths and masses on both sides and would have been a strong force to counteract the pernicious and mischievous influence of Carson and his friends. He was so independent and outspoken even in courts of law, often openly charging the judiciary with partiality for one side or another, that he was often committed and sentenced for contempt of court. He would always carry a small cloth-bag with him, containing some prison-requisites, because he expected at any moment, whilst pleading in courts, to be commit-

ted to prison for contempt, and hence, with a lawyer's foresight, provided himself for contingencies before-hand. If there were more personalities like John Redmond, both in Ireland and India, one would hear much less of petty communal squabbles in both these countries. Both Indian and Irish youths might study that character and try to emulate him in their daily lives.

But since this wholesome check was removed by premature death, before he appeared on the scene, Carson had the full possession of the field with none to obstruct or oppose his silly pranks. In course of time he became the virtual dictator of Ireland. As a member of the British Coalition Cabinet, he was trying to make "Democracy" safe for the world, as a leader of the Ulsterites he was endangering and jeopardising the first elementary principles of that very democracy, by refusing to recognise the normal ordinary rule of majority and trying to impose the minority's will, by all sorts of crooked and coercive methods, pretending to kill "Kaiserism" in Germany, whilst playing a little "Kaiser" himself in Ireland. Having taken a solemn oath in a pompous style and in a religious ceremonial manner, he and his followers proceeded to fulfil it with a most scrupulous and Christ-like 'honesty'. The inevitable result of this religious covenant was that they owed first duty to their religion and creed, and when that duty conflicted with any other, even loyalty and allegiance to the British Crown, the latter must give way, as they had sworn to observe that covenant at all costs. Hence, a Protestant Carsonite priest declared from a Protestant pulpit 'Religion and loyalty to Crown are inextricably intertwined'. James Chambers, a lieutenant and right-hand man of Carson, openly announced, amidst popular applause, that

BOOK 1

Ulster owned allegiance to the Crown only so long as her superior position and theory of 'chosen people' was admitted, when that ceased he will also cease to sing "God save the King" He appealed to the Ulsterites to make most of England's embarrassments, because "England's difficulties were Ulster's opportunities" This gentleman was awarded with the fat-salaried and highly responsible post of Attorney-General, as a fitting recognition of his "loyalist" views Prof. Wiong of Canada put in a different construction and expressed the same anti-Crown ideas in his own colonial way, viz "The thoughtful Canadian and Australian will deny that he owes loyalty to the British Isles, he feels this no more than an Englishman feels loyalty to Canada Each of them is satisfied to be loyal to himself A racial domination involves either isolation or the supremacy of a dominant race in mixed states, it tends to mere pride and arrogance, to thoughts like those of the Hebrews that their race is the "Chosen of God" When British Empire was young, we used to hear a good deal about triumphant destinies of the Anglo-Saxon race To-day no wise statesman has any thought of trying to anglicise the British Empire"

Thus ideas and theories are spread from one part of the Empire to another, repudiating both personal allegiance to the Crown or territorial affiliation to England Is this not extremely interesting to us in India, where strange and anti-diluvian notions of absolute and unconditional loyalty and allegiance, are taught from the very childhood, beginning with primary schools, and the same chorus is kept up throughout the life? Whether in temple of justice or temple of god, in social functions or religious gatherings, in sports and daily routine, in morn-

INDIA AND IRELAND

ing walks or evening drives, one hears constantly dinned into his ears the same doleful sonorous unmusical tone, "God save the King," when a very large section of Canadians, Irishmen, South African nationalists and other white colonials will refuse either to join the chorus or even to stand to attention or doff their hats. This public exhibition of loyalty is more excusable and more understandable in clubs or at dinner tables, when tumblers are empty and thirsty throats are dry, any excuse that will fill the one and appease the other, is justifiable. Hence the social custom at the end of the function, "Gentlemen, to the King", as if the feelings of fidelity and the sense of loyalty, have become so deadened and morbid, as to require an external stimulant to stir up the sleeping sentiment with a dose of strong irritant.

But to return to our Ulster friends, in order to advance these highly seditious views and objects, Orangemen in Ulster started "Orange Lodges", secret clubs and societies, not in Ulster alone but in England too, by their friends such as Burnswick Club and other institutions. Flanagan, the Protestant Orange leader, openly maintained that if their Church ascendancy was not maintained the British Crown will forfeit both allegiance and recognition from Orangemen, and the same view was held and acted upon by Fairman, Cook and others, worthy predecessors of Carson. They would not stop short at anything, and during the war it was openly alleged that they had even secret allegiance with the enemies, whose agent was invited to Ulster, particularly to arrange for smuggling of arms. The Ulsterite Irish soldiers and volunteers were openly exhorted not to fight for the British and the Allies till their conditions were satisfied. Finding that in spite of all these threats and propaganda,

BOOK I

the Home Rule Bill, attempting the unification of whole Ireland, still proceeded, Carson went still further and declared open armed rebellion against the British-Crown and Parliament, declaring that he would offer armed resistance to the enforcement of that British Parliamentary measure into Ulster. It was an open declaration of war, a rebellion and insurrection, not merely in words and propaganda, but actually put into action. Thousands of volunteers were recruited and armed, large quantities of arms and ammunition were openly smuggled and manufactured, and armed volunteers paraded and moved about the streets of Belfast and other towns, and the police and the authorities merely looked on, refusing to take any action, although importation and possession of arms for the whole of Ireland was restricted and prohibited. Wills rightly remarked that "Germany relied on Carson and the guns she had supplied to Ulster to keep Britain off the struggle."

Now let us consider the attitude of Tory Press, and Tory Party in British Parliament and even Cabinet. The Northcliff Press Combine, the most important and powerful publicity corporation in England, sent a special representative to Belfast to report in detail all the heroic-gallant deeds of this arch-rebel and his rebellious gang, and these coloured and exaggerated one-sided reports were broad-cast in all parts of the world, including Europe and America. Through the same agency and by a special arrangement, not only was the rebellion and insurrection, the incitement to mutiny and open challenge and defiance to duly constituted authority (British Parliament and Cabinet) attempted to be justified, but even highly extolled as commendable acts of patriotism and as sacred religious duty.

INDIA AND IRELAND

Contrast the attitude of the same Junker Press with regard to India, Egypt and even the other half of Ireland (Dublin) Even the slightest resistance, shown to most inequitable and immoral acts of government, a non-violent struggle against all the atrocities and injustice, and the same jaundiced press in England will clamour for drastic measures, the extreme necessity for preserving law and order, the imperative need to maintain respect for constituted authority, and last but not the least, the preservation of British prestige All these considerations they would urge on the authorities for ruthless and brutal action to save the Empire from extinction and ruin

More exasperating and outrageous still was the brazen-faced and shameful attitude displayed by responsible toady leaders in England A covenant signed by Lord Roberts, Lord Milner, Admiral Seymour and other high personalities occupying responsible civil, military and naval positions, declared that "armed forces of the Crown should not be used to deprive the people of Ulster of their rights as citizens of the United Kingdom" Let us pause here for a moment and weigh this important "Magna Charta," of the citizens of United Kingdom Men holding highest positions in public life, holding most responsible posts under the Crown, including the Commander-in-Chief and a Governor-General, openly declared in a signed document that citizens have a right to protect their supposed rights by means of an open armed rebellion and resistance, defying the Crown, Parliament and Cabinet and all the authorities, local and imperial

Just let us consider the application of this principle in all the parts of the Empire outside Ulster, the

BOOK I

attitude shown, and the measures adopted by the toadies of the same clique, belonging to the same political party, Imperial stalwarts of the British Empire. About the same time only, a few years after this precious declaration, Jhalianwalla tragedy was enacted by Gen. Dyer, when hundreds of unarmed and peaceful citizens, men, women and children, were literally butchered for the "heinous" offence of assembling in a meeting to pass an innocent and inoffensive resolution. The Northcliff Press and the military and civil clique, the same Parliament not only justified but highly extolled the inhuman atrocities of the white butcher, and as a mark of appreciation, the same British public awarded him with a public purse. Similarly in Egypt, Baron Lloyd threatened to blow off the Egyptian Parliament and actually brought in the Egyptian harbour British war-ships to execute his threats, because the Egyptian nationalists wanted to exercise the most elementary constitutional right of passing a measure that was supposed to be detrimental to British interests. Thus the British arms were to be applied to prevent the exercise of a right conferred by British-Parliament itself.

This partiality and open discrimination becomes still more glaring and the Imperial hypocrisy, insincerity and dishonesty become thoroughly exposed in the case of the treatment meted out to Catholic inhabitants of the same country under exactly similar circumstances and at the same time.

About 18 months after the formation of Ulster Volunteer crops, the Dublin Nationalists and Republicans, as a measure of protection, and as a reply to the open challenge from their Ulsterite opponents, began

INDIA AND IRELAND

recruiting similar bands of volunteers,—the Irish Republican Volunteers,—particularly, as they rightly apprehended that they could expect no help or protection from the British in the event of an open attack or aggression. The same double-faced hypocrites, press and statesmen and general public loudly clamoured for repressive measures to suppress this new menace, when Carson and his gang were openly allowed to smuggle arms and publicly paraded in streets and parks, fully armed, without any obstruction or interference from police or authorities, an attempt on the part of (Dublin) Volunteers to clandestinely import arms was vigorously opposed, and a company of Volunteers, returning from the harbour, was accosted, called upon to surrender its arms, and on its refusal to do so, was fired at and some gallant lads were killed and wounded in the streets, without a word of protest from the whole of England, though such an outrage naturally caused a wave of indignation and resentment throughout the South of Ireland

In vain did individual Britisher, more honest and frank than the rest of the Imperialist clique, protest against such outrageous discrimination and injustice. Their cries were in wilderness. One such exception was Thomas Johnson, who in his 'Handbook of Rebellion' pertinently remarks, "there is not, throughout the long story of the armed challenge to the constituted authority in Ulster, a single execution, imprisonment, deportation, prosecution or even a police baton charge"

Sir Roger Casemate, the Dublin leader was shot dead as a rebel when he was detected attempting to smuggle arms from foreign countries. Sir Edward Carson, the

BOOK I

Ulster-leader, was rewarded with a seat in British Cabinet and was raised to one of the highest judicial positions in British Empire, for not only clandestinely, but openly importing arms from Germany and other places and recruiting a whole army of rebels and even inciting soldiers to mutiny. Still we hear constant appeals, dinned into our ears, in season and out of season, to have faith in British sense of justice and fair-play, in such meaningless stunts and phrases as 'equality of treatment' and "no discrimination between the 'children', no matter what their colour, caste and religion" "Carson girls" haunted Irish barracks calling upon military and police to resign if Home Rule Bill was passed, and the British press and public extolled this patriotic spirit, and quoted this, as an instance of awakening amongst the Irish womanhood. In India "Gandhi girls" indulging in such innocent and patriotic pastimes as carrying a national flag, singing patriotic songs or picketting foreign cloth shops, are publicly insulted and safely lodged for long terms in British jails, Viceroy and Governors of the Roberts, Milner and Dyerian breed pompously declaring as a justification that law is no respecter of sex or age, and respect for it must be maintained at all costs.

Balfour raised some feeble protests, that it was undermining the discipline of the troops to tell them that they were not bound to obey orders on Home Rule issue, but neither he nor Asquith, had courage enough to take action. Asquith even went further than Balfour and frankly remarked, "The new dogma, countersigned as it now is by all the leading men of the Tory Party, will be invoked and rightly invoked, cited and rightly cited."

INDIA AND IRELAND

called in aid and rightly called in aid, whenever the spirit of lawlessness, fed and fostered by a sense whether of real or imaginary injustice, takes body and shape and claims to stop the ordered machinery of self-governing society" On another occasion he retorted to the claim of "conscientious" objectors that "the possession of a conscience and a repugnance to obey inconsistent and objectionable laws are not the monopoly of the Protestants of North-East of Ireland" He always announced that steps would shortly be taken to vindicate law and constitution, but, being over-powered by his colleagues and Parliament, he was not able to move his little finger Hobson, a British publicist of note, justly criticised that "the same cabinet that ran away from Carson rebellion, ordered drastic action against labour leaders who preached the doctrine of 'optional obedience,'" and few years after, the same Tory Party carried a ruthless campaign against Civil Disobedience and satyagraha movement in India, though the whole struggle is based on conscientious objection, moral force, truth and non-violence This Irish Carsonian episode thoroughly unmasks the Conservative party and exposes its hypocrisy and insincerity and double-facedness in a manner such as no other event in recent British history does

This open partiality and discriminatory treatment did not exist in politics and executive government alone, but as shown above, by quoting most condemnatory remarks by some Irish judges themselves, they had poisoned the fountains of justice and completely polluted the whole of judicial administration Sir Edward Carson, the arch-rebel, who if justice had prevailed in Great Britain, would have been shot dead for raising this insurrection

BOOK I

and rebellion in war-time, and there is no doubt that the same cabinet and ministers would have awarded that highest penalty to any other individual, going half the length of Carson, in any other part of the Empire, was never called upon by any court or tribunal in Great Britain or Ireland even under disciplinary jurisdiction to explain his conduct, on the contrary, as a member of the Coalition Government, this murderer of democracy and constitution, became the protector of minorities and small nations. As a Privy Councillor and member of the highest judicial tribunal in the Empire, he often preached the ethics and duties of legal profession, particularly the respect and reverence that this profession owes to Law, Order and Constitution.

Contrast this attitude with the ruthless manner in which Indian members of legal profession are dealt with for disregarding and disobeying even most absurd and silly Executive decrees, that no self-respecting man would submit to, and for defying most lawless laws issued as Ordinances under Executive "Fiats" without the sanction of popular consent, or morality or justice behind it. Not only are they made to suffer long humiliating and distressing terms of rigorous imprisonment like ordinary criminals, but several of them are even deprived of their "Sanads", as being considered unfit to represent the "Majesty" and "Dignity" of British "Law and Justice". Still Indian youths are appealed to, by a section of Indian politicians themselves, to have faith and confidence in the British sense of justice and equality. Even that stalwart Indian Nationalist, Lokmanya Tilak, committed that one serious blunder in his life, for which he ever afterwards repented, when he believed that he would get better justice-

INDIA AND IRELAND

from a British tribunal and judiciary in that supposed "land of freedom and justice", but after a bitter experience, to his cost, he learnt the contrary, when he returned disappointed and completely disillusioned, being convinced himself and bringing conviction to many of his still wavering friends in India, that justice in matters affecting their self-interest and political status, is as rare a commodity in England as in India and you may not be able to secure it in either country under these conditions, no matter what talents, money or energy you apply to obtain it

The most ironical joke in that sorry episode known as "Tilak-Chirol" case, was that this most rebellious and seditious figure, for so many years both in Ulster and English public life,—Sir Edward Carson, appeared as a counsel for the defence, and in a hypocritical and unbashful manner, condemned the nationalist activities of Lok Tilak, trying to make him out as a rank seditionist in India, engaged in unpardonable crimes of fighting for the freedom of his country And what considerably added to the cruel humour of the situation was that even in the midst of the address, this great upholder of Law and Order in all countries except his own, was urgently summoned to Ulster to indulge in some wild anti-constitutional and illegal pranks against Dublin and England

These incidents and episodes may appear insignificant and even absurd, but they go a long way to create that feeling of unrest and discontent in Indian youths that ultimately leads to loss of all hope and confidence, in securing remedy by any other means except the last arguments of a desperado in his last stage,—the bombs and the bayonets Far-sighted statesmen like Asquith,

BOOK I

and shrewd historians like Johnson, Hobson and others foresaw this inevitable psychological result on youthful minds in other parts of Empire. They correctly predicted that Ulster example is bound to be quoted and followed with certain justification in other parts of the Empire, and with what face could British authorities and individuals, directly encouraging and supporting Carson rebellion, expect to suppress even lesser rebellions in Dublin, India or Egypt? How can Lord Roberts, a Commander-in-Chief in India, enforce Martial Law in India, or Lord Milner, that supposed iron-handed administrator, adopt drastic measures either as a High Commissioner in Egypt or Governor-General in south Africa, to suppress national upheavals in these distant parts, after having given their open approval by publicly signing a declaration in their own country in England, protesting against the use of arms or strong measures against Carsonites "attempting to assert their civic or political rights *by any means*?" Carson himself saw and felt the absurdity and inconsistency of the situation better than his friends and supporters in England, and when Dublin began to recruit volunteers and make preparations similar to Ulster to resist the onslaught of minority, he was forced to admit the justification of their action and remarked, "I am not sorry for the armed drilling of those who are opposed to me in Ireland. I certainly have no right to complain of it. I started that with my own friends. I was told that I was looking for a revolution 2½ or 3 years ahead. I was very glad. I did not mind that." Had such words been uttered in India, would not the Counsel for the Crown as in the Meerut case, triumphantly quote them in court and demand condemnation of accused on his own statement?

CHAPTER VI

RISE OF SINN-FEIN AND DUBLIN STRUGGLE.

Here we come to a stage in the Irish history which becomes most important and instructive from the Indian nationalists' point of view

We need not go into greater detail than is necessary for our main purpose, viz to show a parallel between Irish and Indian problems, laying particular stress on those stages, episodes and events, that emphasise a similarity, and thus furnish a demonstrative illustration to India. Hence we have not referred to ancient history, showing the beginning of British domination or Irish subjugation several centuries ago. Since the conquest of this land about 1169 A. D., there has been a persistent and determined revolt to get back her freedom and independence passing through terrible ordeals, in Elizabethan period and even in Cromwell's regime. In vain did Wolfe Tone, the father of Irish Nationalism, lose his life in a futile attempt at insurrection with the assistance of the French in what is still known and celebrated as 1798 Rebellion. In vain did Grattan and a band of stalwart constitutionalists try the other constitutional methods to attain the same laudable object. Since the Treaty of Limerick and the conquest by William of Orange, the situation for centuries remained practically the same, the country and its people passing through endless tyrannies and atrocities, large numbers either driven out by arms or by force of circumstances, and helping other countries to gain their independence and freedom like America. From an Indian Nationalist's

BOOK I

standpoint, the real interest begins from comparatively more recent Sinn-Fein activities. In its origin and progress, upto a certain stage, that movement in Ireland bears great resemblance, in many aspects, to the Indian National movement, as represented by Congress. Like the leader of the Indian National Congress, Arthur Griffiths, its leader and founder, also lost all faith in British justice, and all hope of securing her goal by merely relying upon their sincerity and good-faith or pursuing only constitutional methods. As in India, he believed, till 1914, that Ireland was not prepared for an armed rebellion against the mighty power, and more as a political expediency and not as a political creed, Sinn-Fein leaders at the early stage relied upon non-violent and peaceful methods such as constructive and nation-building programme. The mottoes of both were also the same,—self-reliance, self-help and self-confidence,—no more leaning on the broken reeds like the British Parliament or legislative institutions. Like the Congress campaign in India, the Sinn-Feiners started a country-wide national campaign for the revival of Irish language, Irish industries, Irish customs and habits, in short, to remove, as far as possible the Anglican influence, due to foreign domination and re-generate once again what they described as Irish-Ireland. Gaelic Leagues, national education, encouragement of indigenous and boycott of British products including cloth, awakening amongst the masses particularly peasantry in villages, and at a later stage refusing to recognise British institutions as far as possible. Like the Satyagraha prisoners in India, they too would take no part in Court proceedings when

RISE OF SINN-FEIN

prosecuted for carrying on patriotic activities To make this situation still more similar, besides the Sinn-Fein, there also existed a political party of Moderates and Constitutionalists, who, under their leader Redmond, still continued to pin their faith on British sense of justice and fair-play, and were content to receive whatever crumbs they could get from the Mother-of-Parliaments When the Sinn-Fein had boycotted that institution as completely bogus and farcical, so far as Ireland was concerned, the Redmondites contested elections and formed a small minority of Irish Party in British Parliament They represented the political party in India known as Liberals, Moderates and Constitution-
alists, who continued their futile efforts under practically similar impotent and helpless conditions till the last

Arthur Griffiths, the leader of the Sinn-Fein movement was considered a man of balanced judgment and not of extremist tendencies in politics Pursuant to the party-motto of self-reliance, self-help and self-respect, they desired to achieve the national regeneration and Irish revival mostly by education, propaganda and other non-violent constructive methods He was an able journalist and propagated these views through his journal The Nationalists too having experienced bitter failures of some armed rebellions, had either lost both faith and courage, or were gradually resigning themselves either to the constitutional methods of Redmondites or constructive programme of Sinn-Feiners There was as usual a left-wing in the Sinn-Fein, as in this country, who aspired for higher political goal of complete separation from England and establishment of full republican government, and they were prepared to

BOOK 1

achieve their goal by any means. But even upto 1912 to 1914, their strength and following was negligible and their spasmodic and individual attempts at violence, were generally condemned even by Sinn-Feiners. The moderate temperament of the people in general was evidenced at the polls, when in spite of repeated breaches of faith and promises by British Parliament, Redmondites had fairly good success and carried a large majority thus proving that people had not yet lost faith in British Parliament and hoped to secure their moderate goal of Home Rule through constitutional methods. For years the controversy centred round Home Rule issue. All this history reads very much like a chronicle of recent political events in India, Sinn-Fein representing National Congress, Redmondites corresponding to Liberals and Moderates, Republicans practically occupying the same position as terrorist parties here. Just as Pitt's India Bill was practically the first step towards Indian reforms, so Pitt's Irish Bill was the beginning of small and limited franchise for Ireland and to make this parallel more complete, just as certain minorities here are considered favourite of British Tories and Conservatives and are made the object of special favours and measures of protection, so the Protestant minority of Ulster was the specially privileged and favoured minority section of Ireland.

Inter-communal friction and struggle between Protestant Ulsterites and Dublin Catholics was and is more intense and keen than Hindu-Muslim disagreement. The minorities in India are clamouring for special privileges and safe-guards, and with that proviso, are equally emphatic and forceful in their demand for

RISE OF SINN-FEIN

Dominion status or Independence, according to the one or the other section to which they belong, whereas Irish minority, under their leader, Carson, made a determined and even armed resistance to the establishment of even Home Rule for whole of Ireland and claimed an entire separation from the rest of the country with a direct control under British Parliament

Thus Protestants of Ulster go much further than Indian minorities and refuse to recognise, under any circumstances, the central authority of Dublin, because it has a Catholic majority. They much rather prefer to be under a territorially foreign jurisdiction of British Parliament outside the Irish boundaries, because thereby they continue to be under British Parliament direct with a perpetual Protestant majority. Some British statesmen for years resisted this, what appears to us to be a preposterous claim of Ulsterites and from Gladstone, Asquith down to the Coalition Government of Lloyd George, during and after the War, thought of only one Irish Home Rule Bill. The persistent efforts of both sections of Ireland as well as of some British statesmen to solve this tangle satisfactorily to both parties failed and neither party would yield on principle. Dublin Catholics cannot be blamed for firmly refusing to surrender to the unpatriotic and anti-nationalist demand of Ulsterites. They rightly resisted till the last the sinister endeavour of British Tories to divide their small country not only into two communal or territorial sections, but to cut off an important and valuable slice altogether and attach it to Great Britain. Ultimately, Lloyd George, who was at the head of Government at the time of final peace, yielded partly to Carsonites' threat of open rebellion and also to

BOOK I

the internal pressure from British Parliament, and agreed to exclude the six counties of Ulster from the Home Rule Agreement for Ireland. Lloyd George's policy was somewhat similar to McDonald's with regard to India, and was correctly described at that time as "Hunting with the hound, and running with the hare."

At the time of the separation of Ulster, it was suggested, as a poor consolation to Ireland, that the arrangement would be temporary, and that in course of time the high feelings would subside and both the sections would come closer and thus remove this 'anomaly' by ending the deadlock. Experience has unfortunately proved otherwise. Ten years have passed since this wrong step was taken, and the separate sections, far from coming closer, are perhaps wider apart to-day, than ever before, and with every year of separation that position becomes stronger and more consolidated, thus rendering the chances of Union more and more hopeless. If, on the other hand, the other experiment, based on the sound principle of justice and fairplay, had been tried and the original intention of granting Home Rule for whole Ireland, had been carried out, it is possible that after some temporary outburst, the position would have been accepted and both would have worked together the same constitution, being reconciled to it, as accomplished and inevitable fact.

In spite of this bitter experience in Ireland, the same blunder though luckily on a smaller scale, is sought to be repeated with regard to India,—the same futile consolation to appease the Nationalist to accept separate communal electorates as a temporary arrangement for few years, till communal harmony is better established,

RISE OF SINN-FEIN

whereas it has been almost a uniform phenomenon in human affairs, that people become fonder and more attached to special privileges by longer enjoyment, and if the matter is not set right at the initiative stage, the chances of restoring the just arrangement later are practically nil

But the question that most interests a nationalist student of politics and modern history is, as to what transformed this comparatively peaceful country whose people had so much faith in constitutional methods as for years to back up and support the docile Parliamentary Party of Redmond, and whose idea of revolution at an early stage did not go beyond a non-violent constructive national programme of revival, what converted this set of comparatively non-aggressive, non-militant and dogmatic people, into a set of red-hot revolutionaries, whose only argument then became the bayonet and the bomb, who for a considerable time made the half of Ireland a regular "War area", Dublin being practically divided into two hostile camps,—'the Dublin Castle' and surrounding official area representing one contending party, and the rest, an almost prohibited and banned area, another party, what made a large section of peaceful population, that at fixed intervals thronged the election booths and looked up to ballot-boxes, as if they were magic-boxes, for relieving all their distress and hardship, now turn to secret clubs and underground channels, relying rather on their physical strength, dare-devil dashing adventures and power of resistance and endurance, than on speeches and writings full of soft arguments and rigid logic?

Only a few years before the 1916 Easter Rebellion the political atmosphere in Dublin, Cork and other

BOOK I

important centres in the south, was most discouraging to the left-wing extremists. Their Republican Volunteers were hooted and hissed and openly insulted by the populace whilst marching in the public streets, even of Dublin, which was considered their head-quarters. Their speakers were howled down, and at times even lynched when they tried to preach Republican doctrine and appealed for recruits for their Volunteer ranks. No decent citizen would give them quarters. Even the majority of Sinn-Féin, including their leaders like Arthur Griffiths, severely condemned these rash acts of irresponsible youths, and called upon all the responsible men and institutions to dissociate from such mischievous and harmful pranks. A similar condemnation followed from press, platform and public institutions, as we often notice in India to-day, under similar circumstances. The Dublin authorities and their proteges, the Tory press and party in England, broadly smiled a smile of complete satisfaction and confidence, and scoffed at the idea of the remotest possibility of an armed rising in Ireland. Mr A. A. Bamman, a Tory publicist, in a book called "Persons and Politics of the transition" first published only a short time before the 1916 Rebellion, said, "It can be confidently stated that Ireland will never rise to an armed rebellion. What Wolfe Tone could not do a century and Parnell thirty years ago, Redmond and Griffiths could not do to-day, because farmers were contented with the Land Act. There may be a little upheaval here and there, but that would not matter much." Events of a few months and few years, proved this to be entirely a false and misleading political prophecy for Ireland, but this publication genuinely re-echoes the views and sentiments, not only of the

RISE OF SINN-FEIN

imperialist mentality of England at the time, but also of a large section of people in Ireland itself. The bitter experiences of past failures had caused a natural aversion to this method of obtaining redress, and those few who desired to repeat similar experiments again were looked upon as inexperienced and short-sighted rash youths whose efforts were doomed to failure.

As in India, so in Ireland, in spite of some anti-war propaganda carried on by extreme politicians, consistently with the general mass mentality of looking to Westminster for justice and reward, both sections of Ireland, Dublin as well as Ulster, at early stages, and for a long time during its continuance liberally and ^Agenerously supported the Allies and Great Britain, both with men and money. Just as Mahatma Gandhi for the time being forgot his role of political agitator and wholeheartedly threw his weight with the Government, even going to the length of acting as a recruiting officer for the British army and appealing to the impoverished country to subscribe ungrudgingly to the donations and War-Loans, so Redmond in Ireland, threw himself heart and soul into the cause and met with a general response from the Irish people, raising a fairly large army of what were described as Redmondite Volunteers, and this was accomplished in spite of a strong hostile attitude taken up by a section of the extremist press and political party, who openly called upon the people of Ireland to have nothing to do with this war, from which Ireland would derive no benefit, but on the contrary, it would make her position worse. They appealed to Irish youths rather to fight for their own cause against the British nearer home. This anti-war propaganda had not much

BOOK I

effect and with few exceptions, generally there was great enthusiasm for the Allies' cause in the Great War

Thus under all these circumstances, and from the trend of events it could be seen that the general attitude of the Irish people as a whole was not so anti-British and rebellious, as was so suddenly developed at a later stage, particularly during the period 1917 to 1921. So we come back again to the same question, still unanswered, as to what brought about the wonderful mass psychological phenomenon, which suddenly converted so many constitutionalist, constructive, sober and moderate people into open rebels. The very citizens who condemned loudly individual acts of violence and publicly hooted and howled down republican Volunteers, now came forward, not only to offer every possible help, but in spite of great danger and risk, to harbour them in their hearths and homes, and to protect them at the risk of their own lives. They had experienced great difficulty in recruiting men and supplying materials, but now the ranks of Republicans swelled and they were also provided with ample supplies of money and provisions. Those that were looked upon as dangerous in public life and menace to public safety, and were described as enemies of the cause of freedom and of the country, were now looked upon and extolled as redeemers, saviours, martyrs and heroes. At the same time the Redmondites gradually lost their ground, the position being entirely reversed. People ridiculed and scoffed at them when they still pointed at Westminster as the only temple for national worship, as the only fountain of justice, equality and fairplay, for Irish people. The election results were the best medium to show the

RISE OF SINN-FEIN

national political pulse and temper, whereas before and during the war, the constitutionalists completely swept the polls and carried away almost all the seats, later in 1918-19 when the Nationalists decided to contest elections, not to enter Parliament, but to form a National Assembly of the elected members to carry on their parallel government in Ireland, the Redmondites were completely routed, hardly securing one or two seats throughout the country

This mass psychological phenomenon was the result of the same evolution that we notice in all political struggles between the oppressed subject nations and their oppressive rulers. The tyrannical, oppressive and unjust black measures of a short-sighted government, always do more to create a national awakening and rouse the hitherto lethargic and dormant mass enthusiasm, than years of vigorous and persistent political propaganda, conducted by political parties in a subject country. That has been the source of Congress strength in India, the Wafdists' power in Egypt and the Republican influence in Ireland. The peoples' party grows in political power, strength and following, in exactly the same proportion as the oppressive and tyrannical efforts to suppress it. In India in 1930, the Black ordinance and the reign of terror, far from fulfilling the originally intended sinister object of crushing the Congress, in a few weeks, brought out, on the contrary, on the surface thousands and millions of supporters, sympathisers and even combatant followers from quarters and sources least expected. Men, women and youths that had never dreamt in normal times of joining the Congress politics, who perhaps had never attended a single Congress meeting, being engaged in their daily dull routine of

BOOK I

life, who had never worried about what was happening to their next-door neighbour, thousand of such happy-go-lucky, easy-going men and women now came out in the open, with their latent and hitherto dormant patriotic national feeling, suddenly roused to fury, thanks to the ruthless repression started by the government. It was naturally looked upon as an open challenge to the manhood and womanhood of India, a challenge lightly hurled at the whole nation, and they felt that, not only their patriotism but their self-respect as human beings, demanded that it should be accepted and replied to in a manner befitting the great and ancient tradition of their country and people. No amount of Congress propaganda, either from the platform or the press, could have created that spontaneous and sudden national upheaval, as in the words of Grattan, these "laws devised in a spirit of lawlessness "

Similarly, as noted above, it was the same bluffing policy of Baron Lloyd in Egypt that added to the strength of the Wafdist Party and brought a complete unity between all the political parties in Egypt, for which Zaghlul in vain laboured for years during his life-time. The Irish Republicans would perhaps have died an ignominious death in the extremely uncongenial anti-republican political atmosphere of Ireland, had not the Carsonian outrages in Ulster and the atrocious acts of injustice of British die-hards and Tories come to their rescue at the very nick of time, spontaneously rousing the whole nation into fury that ultimately completely swept off the British from the land. So long as bureaucratic mentalities exist in imperialist ruling states, the struggling subject nationalists need never

RISE OF SINN-FEIN

despair of recruitment, when their ranks become thin, you can always rely upon your "friends" to commit some short-sighted political blunder that will at once whip up the dying enthusiasm and fill your recruiting camps once again with enthusiastic patriots and nationalists. The Moderates and hitherto loyalist constitutionalists were shocked at such open injustice and partiality, in treating one like a favourite wife and the other worse than step-children. After all they were human beings and not made of clay, and this, in short, explains the mass psychological phenomenon stated above, transforming the whole country as if by magic and electric shock, and ultimately making the position of the British so hot and uncomfortable as to make them beat a hasty and strategic retreat from the country. On account of these measures, the movement originally started on a small scale as anti-Protestant and anti-Ulster-Carsonite only, very soon developed into a country-wide anti-British, Republican campaign, leaving hardly any individual outside its pale, sweeping the whole nation in one tremendous and irresistible wave. So far as Ireland was concerned, this transparent partiality, injustice, tyrannical oppression and open discriminatory treatment, which appeared at the time as a great national calamity and distress, ultimately turned out to be blessings in disguise. Without them perhaps, the Irish Republican movement would never have gained that tremendous momentum and impetus in such a short time and so spontaneously, as if God was determined to help this nation struggling for its birth-right.

One final strategic and tactical blunder on the part of the British completed, both the triumph of their

BOOK I

enemy as well as their own disaster. We have noted above that in spite of vigorous anti-war propaganda by an extreme section of Irish Republicans, the British throughout continued to receive generous and substantial support, both in men and money, in proportion to the limited means and capacity of this small country. But British die-hards were not content with what was offered so spontaneously and voluntarily. Curiously enough, they always seem to attach more importance and weight, to what is extracted and extorted by force and coercion, than what is received out of fulness of heart and goodwill. Voluntary recruitment gave them no opportunity to show the mailed fist they are so anxious and impatient to exhibit. A silken glove is a sign of weakness and surrender. Hence almost towards the close of the War, they decided to introduce levy by conscription in Ireland. That God-sent act of supreme human folly came as a last straw to break the camel's back. Thus the policy with regard to Ulster had, as we have already seen, prepared ground for a final terrific ferment, and this slight ignition of a single match, in the form of this universally hated and detested measure,—the Conscription Bill, was enough to throw the whole country in a terrible blaze. In vain did their friends, the Redmondites, plead, appeal, argue and protest in Parliament. Like the Indian Liberals, they were treated like an exhausted volcano, a spent-force not worth retaining for any further aid and co-operation. All the services that they could render, and all the help and co-operation that was needed at the critical juncture, had been extorted from them by cajoling, false promises and sweet persuasion. Since then their position had weakened in their own country, and they could neither command a following nor

RISE OF SINN-FEIN

influence in Ireland Hence they could safely, though impertinently and uncereemoniously, be turned out of Westminster Neither their advice nor their protest was heeded, and they had no other alternative but to leave that institution as ignominiously as they had entered some years ago Their plight was as pitiable, and the situation as pathetic as their constitutionalist brown-cousins in India, the Liberals and Moderates They were treated like milch-cattle to be cast away after all the available milk was extracted However on this occasion the Redmondites displayed more courage and self-respect than the Indian Liberals, and they determined to boycott the British Parliament and arranged for a dignified walk-out Thus the last shred in British faith, the last link of British connection in Ireland, was broken

The "Conscription" Act for Ireland as also Rowlatt Act in India, were passed about the same time in the teeth of national opposition and in spite of universal protest, and both remained dead letters as black patches in British constitution Neither could they conscribe a single Irish soldier under the Conscription Act, nor did they dare deal with a single agitator in India under the "Black" Rowlatt Act Though both these measures entirely failed in their original object, they very effectively served another and unforeseen purpose In both countries, they came as a shock to the nation, disilluisioning the most morbid mentalities and shaking off the last vestige in British faith and belief in British *bona fides* Both countries had sacrificed the flowery youths of their country for a cause in which neither was much interested nor stood to gain Both countries though poverty-stricken, semi-starving and heavily taxed had still paid in abundance, relying upon the sweet

BOOK I

promises, misleading slogans and platitudes, and both got their rewards in the right British form and spirit,—the Rowlatt Act and the Conscription Act

But according to an old oriental saying, when God wants to punish an individual or a nation He first makes them lose their "heads" this senseless and silly move of "Empire Builders of the West" was probably the beginning of the end in both the afflicted countries In India, the wave of indignation and resentment was not permanent or of the same duration as in the Ireland With our usual short memories and more pliant and amenable disposition, we, in India, soon forget, not only such "Black Acts" like the Rowlatt Bill but even the blackest deeds like Jhalianwalla Bagh The little smooth plaster of honeyed words, heals our national wounds, and the supposed "errors of judgment" are soon forgotten and forgiven Many of us go knocking at the same door pleading for admission from which they were so recently and so unceremoniously turned out Not so with the Irish Republican brotherhood The consolidation, the unification and the determination that were the happy results of these apparent national calamities, the memory of Ulster atrocities, the British outrages, the Conscription bomb, never faded, but from that date onwards, continued that persistent, ruthless and almost brutal and resolute campaign, that has not ended even with the signing of peace treaty in 1921 and the final evacuation by British For ten long years after the peace, the sacred fire has not yet completely extinguished, but rekindles on occasions as the world witnesses to-day in 1932-33 in the revival of the "Oath" and "annuities" controversies, gradual but sure secession from Empire, through the more peaceful but equally effective Parliamentary

RISE OF SINN-FEIN

methods But fortunately for the subject races, the British statesmen will learn nothing and forget nothing. The lesson of Ireland, so recent and so disastrous, is evidently effaced from slippery bureaucratic British memory We should have thought that after these bitter experiences in Ireland, we would hear no more, at least from that supposed store-house of British wisdom and statesmanship, the "wise Mother of Parliament", about the suicidal policy of 'Divide et Imperata' of pampering one community and provoking another, of playing step-mother to one and devoted loving husband to another Any set of individuals with average and normal intelligence should have learnt one unforgettable lesson from recent Irish History, viz, that a sectional or communal organisation may first originate only for communal safe-guards and protection and be engaged only in inter-communal fights, thus retarding national progress and development for a time, but in the long run, they develop into national forces and organisations, forgetting the smaller original communal issue, they ultimately combine against the common ruling race to fight for the higher goal of freedom and emancipation Was not the Irish Republican brotherhood first started as a catholic organisation to face the Protestant menace of Ulster? And in a very short time was not the original communal issue cast into the background, and instead of facing Ulster in the South, were not these bayonets turned towards Dublin Castle? Did not Carsonite organisation first start with a religious oath, pledge and convention, starting as a sort of Jihad, but ending with the declaration of open political rebellion and even insurrection in the army?

BOOK I

Today in India the British authorities are complacently looking on, when different communal volunteer groups are cropping up like mushrooms because they are apparently considered harmless, or even useful, politically, like the Irish Protestants and Catholics they begin this enrolment and recruitment with a sacred ceremony and oaths in either mosques, temples or Granth-Sahibs of Sikhs. Is the history of Ulster going to be repeated in India, and is the same British Imperial policy that appeared on the surface so irritating and provoking really a divine symptom a "hidden hand" or "blessing in disguise"? Time alone will solve the riddle. In the meantime there is a general impression at least in India and other parts of the world, that the old "Grandmother of Parliament" at Westminster (we presume an old dame after a century is entitled to be promoted to the higher rank of "Grandmother" from a mere mother) is suffering from senile-decay, and the sooner she retires from public life to enjoy a well-earned rest the better for the Empire as well as world in general.

CHAPTER VII

‘ The Easter Rebellion of 1916 and After ’

Before we proceed to the last and important stage of Irish struggle, commencing from 1918 till the signing of truce, there is one incident that deserves a casual and passing notice, that is the 1916 Easter Rebellion. Although it has no parallel in the Indian struggle, still some aspects should be noted even by Indian students of politics.

In the beginning of 1916, the extreme left wing of Republicans, who desired complete separation from England and who had naturally no faith either in Redmondite constitutional methods nor in “Sinn-Fein’s” more national constructive policy, became impatient of the state of affairs and apprehended that this stagnation may have retrograde psychological effect on mass mentality, and devised a plot to seize power by open rebellion. There was no concerted or co-ordinate action, conflicting orders were issued by different leaders, and the Chief of Volunteer staff, not being informed about it and hearing some vague rumours from outside, had actually issued instructions officially to Volunteers not to participate in any such disturbances. Under such hopeless and confounding circumstances, the rising had not a ghost of chance of success. Still the extreme left wing did not recede at the last stage apprehending that such a retrograde move would create a great reaction in their rank and file and may cause a serious set-back for the future. On the other hand, even in the event of a failure, it would create a great sensation and rouse the drooping and lethargic spirit of the youth.

BOOK I

of the country From that point of view, with full knowledge of failure, this small but daring band decided not to secede but to proceed with the pre-arranged programme The Sinn-Fein officially had nothing to do with the rising, and its leader Griffiths, in the official organ, openly disowned all responsibility, and even denounced the action as injuring the cause Accordingly on Easter Monday in 1916, at a given signal, this small batch of Volunteers, less than two thousand indifferently armed and irregularly led, made a dash for all important government buildings, including "Dublin Castle" in Dublin The attempt to raid 'Dublin Castle' failed, but for a short time they achieved remarkable success with regard to other important strategic centres in the city The Post Office in the centre was vacated and occupied by the insurgents and they made it their head-quarters DeValera and Michael Collins, though not at the head of this gallant band, first came into prominence, one as Company-Commander and the other as A. D. C. Besides, a lady of nobility, a Countess, played a very prominent part, being at the head and leading a company of youths Immediately after seizing the important buildings and occupying important strategic corners 15 leaders issued a signed statement declaring complete Independence of Ireland, establishing a provisional government and issuing directions and orders The authorities at first were taken by complete surprise, but within a few hours troops poured in from all sides, till Dublin was converted into two armed hostile camps, on the one hand the British well-equipped, fully armed with most powerful and efficient armaments and numbering about twenty thousand, against bare two thousand, poorly equipped,

THE EASTER REBELLION

badly led Volunteers without organisation and irregularly armed. The disaster was a foregone conclusion. Still for three days and nights this gallant band of adventurous youths held out with inconceivable bravery, doing a considerable damage to government property and resulting in some loss of life on both sides. Ultimately at the end of three days, the inevitable happened, and the Irish Volunteers had to surrender. A statement was issued from the head quarters, calling off the rank and file. Ruthless repression followed, the fifteen leaders who had signed "Declaration of Independence" were shot dead, about 150 men were sentenced to long terms of penal servitude, and more than 1200 men were interned, including DeValera. All republican, and to a great extent even national activities, were suppressed. Press was gagged, public meetings and demonstrations were banned for nearly a year or two afterwards. Some depression and reaction followed but in the long run as the martyred leaders had anticipated, after the effects of the first shock were removed, a sudden revival took place. Even those who did not approve of their action and differed from their methods, could not help admiring their great courage, pluck and, above all, self-sacrifice and devotion to the country that made these devotees of freedom walk straight into the jaws of death and court certain disaster. At the same time it demonstrated once again the futility of such spasmodic, disorganised, and individual upheaval, and verified the oft-repeated advice of great leaders of men, from Lenin downwards, that national emancipation could not be attained by such individual, or even on a small scale collective actions, however courageous and heroic such individuals may be. A

BOOK I

well organised and fully developed mass-action is the first essential of success

However, the effect of this repression and the subsequent depression lasted for about two years, and then there was a sudden revival and re-action. The struggle took a different form, and instead of open insurrection and rebellion, there cropped up underground activities and secret societies, which led unto Black and Tan methods on one side, and Guerilla warfare on the other. The Dail became actual national and a *de facto* parallel government, and the 'Dublin Castle' functioned only to repress the upheaval and practically abdicated all other civic administration and executive functions.

However, before coming to that final period, there is still one more intermediate phase that may be interesting to a section of Indian political students. We have seen before the different political parties corresponding to similar groups in India, the Redmondites being the Liberals and Moderates, the Sinn-Fein representing Congress and the Council-Boycott Party, and between the two, for a short experimental period, there appeared on the political stage Parnell, who may be compared to our leaders C R Das and Pandit Motilal. He, too, for a short time tried the experiment at *Westminster* as the Swaraj Party, under these two distinguished leaders, tried to assail the Indian Legislatures. Both had the same idea of attacking the re-actionary fortress from within as well as from without, and both had to give up the idea after a short time without having attained any appreciable success. Parnell narrated his parliamentary experience in his peculiarly rhetoric way, "Just as the misty and damp British atmosphere outside, often corrodes

THE EASTER REBELLION

and eats away the timber and external walls of the Westminster building, so does the misty mirky bureaucratic political inner atmosphere often damps and makes morbid the most rigid enthusiasm and vigour, of Irish members within " Our Swarajist leaders too had to express in a similar metaphor the effect produced in the minds of some members by the official glamour and pomp of our Maya Mandirs

The Casemate episode about the time of 1916 Easter Rebellion also shows to what length even apparently sober, well-balanced, cultured and respectably situated individuals are driven to in sheer desperation, when the situation appears to them so intolerable, and at the same time betraying the impotence and helplessness of their condition

The Casemate episode could not be disposed of like Easter Rebellion as a spontaneous move of a few irresponsible and impulsive youths on the spur of the moment It had all the appearance of a carefully well-arranged and preconceived plot, thought out by mature and responsible men A German boat full of contraband arms and magazines including machine guns, hand-grenades, thousands of rifles, flying Norwegian colours, was to land with all this inflammable cargo on a shore few miles from Dublin However, the Dublin Castle authorities got timely intimation of it, through the American Embassy But before the German boat could be captured, the intrepid crew at once put on German colours and blew off the boat with all the magazine, thus preventing this valuable and destructive cargo passing into the hands of the enemy The nearest Indian parallel to these desperate events in Ireland like the Rebellion,

and naval enterprise, may be furnished in such ventures, though on a much smaller scale, like the Chittagong raid on armoury and "Kamagatamaru" venture, though in point of magnitude, and gravity, there could be no comparison between these events in these two countries. Still the unequal parallel is of some importance to show how a sense of feeling of helplessness and impotency and loss of faith in other so-called normal or less drastic measures to obtain legitimate redress, drives some desperate mentalities to more or less similar measures under somewhat similar circumstances.

The combined effect of all these various circumstances was to lead to that blackest and bloodiest period in Irish struggle 1918 to 1921-22 when both contending parties were driven to such extreme and inhuman methods, as to tar and mar forever the reputation of British administration and earn a name for Irish Republicans, as a set of most ruthless desperados that any national struggle has ever produced.

Modern Irish history once again demonstrates, if any further demonstration was needed, that national conscience once awakened and flame of Freedom once kindled, it is impossible to suppress the one or completely extinguish the other by any human agency. Wise and far-seeing statesmanship will rather endeavour to find a safe and healthy channel for the flow of pent-up national feeling instead of making a futile attempt to prevent any leakage. The visible 'flow' on the surface howsoever inconvenient and annoying, is still less dangerous than the invisible underground current that creates misleading external sense of false security.

Thus in Ireland the Redmondites and the Parnellites, the Sinn-Feiners and the Gallic-Leaguers, and a host of

THE EASTER REBELLION

other Battalions, that were hitherto conducting the operations each in its own different way but all on the surface, were driven by the excessive drastic measures of a "strong" government to secret societies and underground channels, which furnished a most demonstrative precedent to the world, that what is not attainable by years of constitutional methods could be achieved by a few years of what are described as less honourable but more efficacious means. Did not a famous American Judge once remark "that an excess of law is more dangerous than excess of liberty or even disorder"? The Redmondites of India,—the Moderates and so-called constitutional party—are long dead politically and as some of the remnant leaders themselves frankly confess, it has become a party of few leaders practically without any following from amongst the masses

The Congress Party for the present is recognised to be the most powerful and potential political organisation in India. Its greatest rival and opponent in the political field, particularly amongst the youths, is the steadily growing terrorist party in some provinces in India. For the present the pent-up feeling and newly awakened national consciousness, find a comparative safe channel for a large section of even impatient and impetuous youths, through this non-violent outlet, provided by the National Congress. Let the British statesmen make their choice in proper time. Completely to crush or kill a national upheaval in such a vast populous country is a wild and chimerical idea, a Churchillian or Dyerian dream that will never be realised.

The "contemptible, mischievous and irresponsible" youths of the Irish Republican of 1912 who were howled

BOOK I

down as enemies of their country, to whom nobody gave quarters, soon became martyrs and heroes of the land and there was hardly a home in the South of Ireland that did not receive, protect and harbour them with open arms regardless of the extreme penalties of law, knowing fully well that such hospitality, if discovered would cost the host his life. Such was the magic, worked by the "logic" of the so-called "strong" men of Westminster and Dublin Castle. The 'crushing' process started by the British ultimately resulted in their hurriedly rushing out of the country, and the latest developments show that the parties are not yet "out of the woods". Churchillian die-hards in England may perhaps be able to drive out of active politics of India that seditious and "half-naked Fakir", and thereby remove the greatest and most efficacious policing agency in India so far as the terrorist party and movement is concerned.

CHAPTER VIII

The Final Phase, 1918-1922.

Now as regards the final phase of the Irish struggle with the British, beginning a year or two after the 1916 Rebellion and ending with the signing of the treaty in 1921-22, it is not necessary to go into all the ghastly and tragic details. We will only make a brief survey, always having in view our main and primary object so often stated before.

We must always remember the small area and population of Ireland. It can be submerged into one of the smallest provinces of India, and when we further realise the fact that so far as this violent conflict with the British was concerned, the six important Ulster Protestant Counties of the north had not only no share but were often directly opposed and co-operated with the hostile camp, which reduced the dimensions and magnitude considerably, making the comparison with India still more untenable. The other point to bear in mind as contrasting with the Indian position is the important fact, that it was a small but important part of the Western World, populated by White Christian community, a sort of a buffer state between England and Central Europe, a close neighbour to Great Britain, with quick communications and easy transport facilities. A large number of original Irish immigrants had settled down in America and Central Europe, occupying high responsible and influential positions, both in the New as well as the Old World, which was an additional circumstance to draw sympathy, support and active co-operation from America and part of Europe, towards

their countrymen and co-religionists, fighting for their emancipation. American help and co-operation, particularly in point of money and strong public opinion, became an important factor and phase at a later stage of the struggle, India must not and should not hope and expect any help to that extent from such quarters.

One further important difference we have to bear in mind is that though Ireland has a small area, with a comparatively small population the struggle at the last stage became a compact and close co-ordinated one, with practical unity in all sects and no internal communal or political discord. An Indian student of modern politics must always keep that distinguishing phase in view. The Irish nation, both Catholic and Protestant, was besides not so completely emasculated by such continuous and rigid Arms Act as in India. As their ancestors had participated in the French Revolution and the American War of Independence as well as in Civil War, so a large section of them had also received perfect military training and they had even experienced "Trench" life as recruits in the British army. These war traditions as well as personal experience helped considerably the recruitment in Irish Republican Brotherhood and some of them, who had officered the British Army, either in war or peace, became efficient and competent officers and organisers of the Republican Army. India has none of these advantages and to that extent Indian problem must be judged differently, particularly in application of methods.

With these preliminary remarks, we will revert to some important stages in the active struggle, and in order to make a narrative reading, we may divide it into different stages, dealing with different organisations and

THE FINAL PHASE

activities that formed indivisible part of the whole episode

The first point is as regards the main organisation or institution that served as a fountain-head, which came to be described as parallel Government. As we have noticed above in the beginning, the Sinn-Fein party had decided to completely boycott the British Parliament, and was against even contesting any seats. That job was left to the Redmondites, who formed themselves into a Parliamentary Party. The position was similar to Indian National Congress boycotting Councils and elections when the seats were filled up by other milder and more moderate political parties or individuals. Both the boycotts were based on the same principles and were lodged for same or similar reasons, viz loss of faith in British legislatures or statesmen and greater confidence in self-reliance and self-help. This is usually the first step that ultimately results in complete jettisoning of so-called constitutional methods.

In Ireland, during and after the war, a third policy was suggested and carried out. It was decided that taking advantage of the great hold the extreme party had on the country, the elections should be hotly contested, but instead of the elected members attending British Parliament, they should form a separate and independent national assembly functioning as "Dail" in the country. This policy proved to be very successful. The Unionists (Redmondites) were completely routed in 1917-18 election which was the first election after the 1916 Rebellion. The Sinn-Feiners and Republicans captured all the seats, except four which were held by the Parliamentary Party. Redmond, the leader of the party, had recently died, and

BOOK I

his place was taken up by Dillon. Nevertheless, with a brazen-faced tenacity, this party of four decided to keep up the show, and instead of dissolving the party, a meeting was called which elected one member as President and another Vice-President, leaving two members only to function as Secretary and Treasurer. As the fiasco became too ridiculous, they adjourned *sine die*, thus saving their faces. Such was the miserable ending of this once powerful and influential party that sustained for years on empty British promises and high-sounding platitudes. Being unable to "fool" the public any longer, they suddenly went down like a rocket extinguished forever with hardly a friend to weep over the loss.

Will our Indian loyalists learn a lesson, or do they also belong to the same incorrigible class, the "divine" rulers, who will learn nothing and forget nothing? Those who are watching the mournful downward march of the Liberal Party in India will feel no doubt that a similar fate is awaiting them here. It has already reached the decaying stage of a "Party of leaders without followers." Let us hope the date of their farewell meeting is not very far when they will assemble for the last time and adjourn "*sine die*", so that the last remnants may at least have a chance of getting assimilated into the one and the only political party in India.

After the decent burial of the party and till the ultimate passing of the Irish Bill, the Irish bloc in Westminster remained vacant and the elected members functioned as an active and live national assembly at Dublin, forming what is described as *de facto* parallel

THE FINAL PHASE

Government for the time being, and also furnishing the nucleus for the future *de jure* Government of Ireland

It is necessary to have some details as regards some of the important functions and activities of this National Assembly so as to have a correct idea about the "parallel" government, because since this successful experiment in Ireland, there has been a good deal of loose talk both amongst rulers and nationalists about this expression. If a popular political party attempts to agitate for the removal of the grievances of the people, or poses as their advocate, spokesmen or intermediary, we at once hear a protest that no "parallel" government would be tolerated in India. If it launches into an aggressive, militant though non-violent, programme, issuing instructions for people to adopt it voluntarily if they are so inclined, again we hear the same senseless protest viz "All that is a sinister endeavour to usurp the functions of government". According to them, nobody has a right to issue instructions to the people or to form organizations and frame programmes. These are all special privileges and monopolies of government, that none should usurp. Whereas considering the Irish question, we feel that the description "parallel government" was correctly applied and that description could not be applied to India unless the organisation and agitation reaches the same stage here.

Now let us find out some of the main differentiating points between the premier political organisation called Indian National Congress and the corresponding institution called "Sinn-Fein" or "Dail-Eireann" in Ireland, and it will at once become apparent to both that the Indian institution is still miles away from that final stage of its agitation, if ever it desires to achieve that end.

BOOK I

In Ireland after the election, just like the British or any other democratic administration, a cabinet with various departments in charge of regular ministries was formed, actually conducting the department and administration under its charge. The Foreign Ministry looked after the external affairs, including sending diplomats to some countries and entering into trade and commercial agreements with foreign countries. The Finance Department in charge of the Finance Minister, levied taxes and raised foreign and local loans. Under a regular resolution passed in the Dail, it was decided to raise a loan of some million pounds, and the bonds were made repayable after certain period and were signed by the President and the Finance Minister of the Dail. These loans were a tremendous success, though the transactions were considered illegal and the bonds when found and the moneys collected were liable to be forfeited and the subscribers were also liable to be prosecuted. Without advertisement or open propaganda these Irish "Dail" Loans were over-subscribed in a short period, the largest share coming from America, so that the Dail had to, in response to public appeal, raise the amount of the loan considerably. Subscriptions poured in from all parts of the world including China, Egypt and last but not the least Bombay, as a mark of sympathy and appreciation. The subscribers knew all the risk and were fully aware that though they received signed bonds in return, still practically these amounts were more in the shape of donations to the cause. This large department, mostly worked by volunteers, was kept very active and busy till the last.

Then there was a separate Defence and Army Department with regularly drilled and uniformed, armed

THE FINAL PHASE

forces of volunteers, properly officered and divided into regimental groups, with a Chief of Staff. The function of this department included arranging for the smuggling of arms and preparing armaments, and there was strict obedience and discipline as in a regular army. The Home Department looked after the establishment and parallel national Law Courts, where trials regularly took place. Most of the members of the Dublin Bar appeared in these courts, where their diplomas were recognised. There were both criminal and civil jurisdictions, and the scheme was so successful that at a later stage the British Courts were practically deserted, all the litigation being transferred to national courts. DeValera later on proposed a new national penal code creating a set of new offences, such as treason, including playing false to the country, acting treacherously and unpatriotically, helping foreign government by any means, including payment of taxes or serving their departments. Espionage and giving secret information were very grave offences, liable to severe penalties including death after a regular court-martial. Thus for every provision in the British Penal Code, for offences against the State, there were corresponding clauses of offences against the country in the National Penal Code. Other activities included policing the towns and cities, preventing disorder and detecting and punishing regular criminals. There was a separate postal service with separate republican stamps adopted and approved by the Dail. Income-tax and certain government offices were deliberately destroyed by fire as a part of the plan to prevent collection of taxes by government. The National Industries Department looked after the development and protection of indigenous industries and complete boycott of British goods.

BOOK I

During the Peace negotiations at Paris after the War, the Dail Foreign Minister claimed a separate and independent representation and arranged to send a special delegation consisting of very influential Americans including a High Court Judge. The Foreign Propaganda department looked after publicity and creation of strong world public opinion, particularly in America. Some journals were started to plead their cause, and this scheme met with great success, particularly in America, where the Senate and the Congress by a large majority passed a resolution demanding Complete Independence for Ireland. The American attitude and sympathy greatly helped the Irish cause as Great Britain, on account of the Great War, was anxious to maintain American opinion on her side. American delegation also visited Ireland to study the situation on the spot, before proceeding to Paris, and subsequently issued their impressions in a publication, severely condemning the British administration in Ireland. Though the delegation was refused an independent hearing on account of British objections at the Peace Conference, still the delegation published and distributed widely the Irish demands, creating a great impression and considerably strengthening the Irish cause.

Nationalisation of Education, revival of Irish language, old customs, habits, dress, festivities and everything connected with separate Irish tradition as opposed to British, also Irish art, crafts and cottage industries,—all these that form the main items in the constructive programme of the Indian National Congress, were but insignificant and trivial items in the bigger venture of Irish Parallel Government.

THE FINAL PHASE

When we compare even superficially and perfunctorily, that complete and marvellous organisation in Ireland that recently earned and deserved the proud title of "Parallel Government", with very modest attempts on our part, we cannot help confessing that we are still a long long way from Dublin, and that it would be as presumptuous on our part to describe our efforts as resembling extreme Sinn-Feinism of last stage, as it is absurd on the part of the authorities to raise it to the majestic level of a "Parallel Government" like Ireland

In 1929, at the Lahore Session of the National Congress to make the ultimatum to government much more effective and emphatic, Subash Babu brought a resolution for establishment, as a preliminary stage, of what might have been described as a preliminary and preparatory stage to Parallel Government. Even that mild resolution was rejected by a very large majority, because Mahatma Gandhi and several other leaders, had to confess on the Congress platform, that India was not yet prepared, even for a preparatory stage of such government. He recalled similar efforts made on a much smaller scale about 10 years ago in 1919-20 when a national call for boycott of educational institution and law courts had not met with sufficient response, and he felt that response would similarly be poor to that call even in 1929. Although the logical and ultimate result of the Civil Disobedience movement would be the establishment of some form of "Parallel Government" based on different lines and supported by different methods and measures, still that final stage of Indian agitation had not arrived in 1929, according to the considered opinion of all responsible leaders, and hence the Resolution was defeated by a large majority

BOOK I

The panicky state of the autocratic official mentality on this "frightful" issue, can be judged from one small incident that happened in the course of the 1930 movement. After my second "baptism" and release from jail, I made a suggestion in a very mild way, through the press, for establishment of a National Arbitration Board in Bombay presided over by some prominent lawyers, to which all the commercial and trading communities, as far as possible, and all the members of the public, should resort to, instead of wasting time, energy and money, in long drawn out and expensive court litigations. I had also suggested a voluntary levy of a small contribution from the public to raise a national fund to meet the necessary expenses. I proposed to address a letter to this effect to numerous associations and institutions in Bombay. Hardly had this suggestion appeared in the Bombay papers than to my great surprise, I found big head lines on newspaper placards in the streets the same evening to the following effect "Parallel Government in Bombay Congress-Sinn-Fein Methods". Within a few hours of the publication of this suggestion in Bombay newspapers, exaggerated reports appeared in the England Press which were transmitted back to India. This wonder was performed in the space of a few hours in the magic days of Science. The Bombay Government was seriously called upon to nip this sinister attempt to establish Sinn-Feinism in Bombay in the bud, and thus avert the Irish disaster which brought about the Dail Eneann parallel government only a few years ago. I could not help laughing at the ridiculous length to which these panicky brains are carried. The local authorities promptly acted on the suggestion with the result that effective measures were taken to "nip the sinister attempt in the bud," and the

THE FINAL PHASE

author of that 'impertinent' suggestion was within a week again safely launched in his cell to dream of his ambitious scheme

A little incident like this, betrays the real inner frame of their mind and shows how even a bogey of "parallel" government acts like a red-rag to the British Bull, thus incidentally enhancing its value and importance from the national standpoint

Our admiration for this small gallant patriotic band in Ireland, grows immensely when we consider the tremendous difficulties and peculiar circumstances they had to face. A comparatively small nation, hemmed in a small area with an internal enemy, Ulster Protestants at one end, surrounded by external enemies all round, the head-quarters of the mightiest and most powerful and resourceful Empire in the world, only a few miles from their seat of rebellion, the greatest military and naval bases at a few hours' run, with the most ruthless and drastic military regime within, the small country infested with numerous agents of British secret service and one of the most cunning and efficient espionage system in the world, all their activities declared illegal with terrible penalties, including capital punishment for every conceivable offence—, with all that, thus hemmed in from within and without, the national struggle did not only persist with wonderful tenacity but ultimately survived ending in a strategic but ignominious retreat of the enemy, and resulting in a complete evacuation of "Dublin Castle", which was in less than three years made the head-quarters of the National Provisional Government, presided over by the 'arch-rebel' Michael Collins. Although there were tempting and large rewards of

BOOK I

thousands of pounds, in one case amounting to £ 40,000, offered on the heads of national leaders, there was hardly a case of betrayal, and the 'arch-rebels,' who, if found a few months before 1920, would have been shot dead against the dead walls of Dublin Castle, became the honoured and exalted legitimate occupants of that very Castle, thus converting what might have been a condemned prisoners' cells for them into a palatial and hospitable residence for themselves

When we consider the situation in India during the last few years, it passes our comprehension as to how in the midst of these apparently insurmountable difficulties, and in the midst of such ruthless repression and endless persecution, these national institutions functioned quite normally and certainly more efficiently than those of the duly constituted authorities. When Lord French, the Lord-Lieut of Ireland, particularly after his narrow escape, became practically a prisoner in his own Castle and dared not stir out, except on most urgent business, and then too closely guarded and surrounded by escorts, playing hide and seek with his pursuers, such as announcing one route openly and secretly using another, discarding the gaudy and well bedecked government cars or saloons and using ordinary conveyances to avoid detection, his opponents, the national leaders, as heads of rebellion freely moved about on mere peddle-cycles, and during the short intervals of leisure from tremendous stress of work, enjoyed the hospitality of citizens and even attended dances and shows and travelled from district to district. Such was the contrast in the lives of Lord French, the Lord-Lieut, of Ireland and Michael Collins the head of "Rebels", one drawing a salary of thousands of pounds, and £40,000 reward fixed on the

THE FINAL PHASE

head of another The Cabinet meetings of the Dail, an illegal body, met at regular intervals, though at different places, and on one or two occasions, also open sessions of the Irish Congress were held, transacting regular and normal business and attended by thousands of visitors. The only difference was that we consistently with our principle of Satyagraha, announce and publish our programmes and thus deliberately invite arrests, whereas they took no notice of the opponents and conducted themselves as if the other side did not exist at all. So also the National Courts regularly assembled when regular Courts were deserted, and all the lawyers, though originally enrolled for British Courts at Dublin and Ireland, freely appeared to plead in these National Courts, their activities being naturally diverted there with their clientele, and there was no question of disciplinary or any other action.

Regular collection of taxes and subscription of Bonds went on, the business of several departments being conducted in various apartments in the cities and towns known as 'Dails' Departmental Offices" with regular clerical and other staff. The only inconvenience was that these places had to be guarded by Volunteers and shifted from time to time. In short, in 1919-20, the function of Dublin Castle Government was practically confined to repress the rebellion only, all the other normal activities of government being, conducted by the rival parallel institution, the Dail.

One other item in the Irish programme that may interest an Indian student was the enforcement of a very rigid and strict social, commercial and every other possible type of boycott on all active co-operators with

BOOK I

foreign government, including government servants, members of the police force and magistracy. This was much more rigorous, ruthless and universal, than has ever been attempted in India, and coupled with the terrorists' methods of intimidation and the usual weapons of the West, the bomb and the bayonet, they achieved astounding results, so that at the later acute stage of the struggle, all the government departments, particularly the police and magistracy, were practically deserted by the Irishmen, some to satisfy their pricking conscience and others, yielding to threats to secure their own safety. R I C, (Royal Irish Constabulary) corresponded to our C I D and were most useful to the foreign administrators, particularly as secret service and espionage corps - just as in India, Indian members of the C I D, are considered most efficient for this job because on account of their privileged position as co-countrymen and members of the same caste, community or religion, they could assume the mask, more successfully and gain access more easily in the inner circles of the opposite camp. In vain did Irish leaders appeal to their patriotic instinct, to their national conscience, all this fell flat. The only call to which they were alive and susceptible was an appeal to their self-interest self-sustenance and self-aggrandisement. Hence Irish nationalists felt that it was necessary first to get rid of the more dangerous enemies at home before they could face the foreign aggressors. Without these local props, it was not possible for any foreign agency to sustain on the national soil. Therefore a persistent campaign was started against the R. I C 'Rascal Irish Cads' as these initials were transcribed by nationalists.

The Dublin Castle on the other hand appreciated their full value, and felt the importance of their existence.

THE FINAL PHASE

as most vital to their continuance They tried the usual counter-game on their side, and started with fulsome flattery about their loyalty, their devotion to duty - presentation of Good-Service medals, special titles of distinction for meritorious services and all the usual paraphernalia that are always found in the reserve store of foreign bureaucracy Have we not in India similar farce enacted, in what are described as "Loyalty Darbars" special police parades, Khan Bahadurship or Rao Bahadurship for special "courage" and "coolness" displayed in saving a difficult situation by firing upon an innocent crowd of unarmed villagers? An Indian C I D's last goal and ambition is to be the recipient of King's police Medal at the hands of the District Officer or the Head of Government in a special police parade held for the purpose. Some of them, who are sentimental, value these things, more, while others who are practical and material, are better satisfied with something substantial and lasting in the shape of promotion or gift of free-land or a lump of gold

Thus human nature is same all over, and whether the colour on the outer cover is white, brown or black, when you open the lid, the substance within, heart and brain, possesses the same human psychology and vicious qualities We find, therefore, similarity in the treatment adopted by all countries, either in the East or West, to deal with these human frailties or weakness It may be a little milder in India, because of the more mild and philosophical temperament of the people It may assume a more violent and brutal form with the more impulsive and practical matter-of-fact Irish nation

Finding that it was waste of time and energy to persuade them by sweet words into patriotism, they adopt-

BOOK I

ed what is considered in the West the more drastic and more effective "argument of the trigger" The result was disastrous for the Dublin Castle Some flunkys in the force adopted the safest and the most lucrative position of serving and earning from both sides They found a terrible inner conflict in their tender and delicate conscience Being tossed about by two conflicting sentiments, loyalty to the Crown and patriotism to their own country, they found a useful and profitable remedy to appease both and followed the traditional ancient human rule of conduct Let the crown and country go to the devil, self first, and like shrewd businessmen of the world, they believed in the doctrine of "making hay while the Sun shines" They retained the King's uniform because it brought them salary from the King, and at the same time rendered most valuable service to the Republican Party, because thereby they not only saved their lives but also satisfied their patriotic instincts as well as provided for the future, by ingratiating themselves into the good-books and confidence of the future rulers of Ireland Thanks to this serious inner conflict in the minds of some of the more "patriotic" and "loyal" members of the R. I. C., the secret service and espionage of the Republican Party became more efficient and effective than that of the Dublin Castle Almost all secret circulars, before they reached their official destination, found their way to the secret departments of the 'Dail' Before urgent instructions either for arrest or search were received by officers who were to execute them, they reached the ears of the intended victims, and that accounts mostly for the wonderful phenomenon witnessed in Ireland, when some of the most prominent leaders and arch-rebels, like Michael Collins, on whose head there was a standing

THE FINAL PHASE

reward of £ 40,000 always escaped from the trap and throughout the most critical period, continued their revolutionary activities in the very heart of Dublin city. How often had he just left his secret place of business and was quietly watching in the crowd outside that had collected to watch the operations of the raiding party, ransacking every nook and corner of the roof to the floor, to find out the 'bird' that had just flown? Such wonders are only possible in Ireland, because of the close co-ordination of the public and secret co-operation of the R I C

Contrast that with the situation in India, where in most cases of so-called conspiracy against the Crown, very often the number of approvers in the witness box is A equal to that of accused in the dock, and a normal citizen will rather harbour a poisonous snake or vicious wild animal in his house than give shelter even to a suspected rebel. Still some indiscreet youths, in their impetuosity and impatience, talk of Ireland and India in the same breath in this particular respect, and often quote the example of Ireland as the strongest argument against the fundamentally different creed and methods of the Congress. Though to a superficial student and observer the two problems appear to be alike and therefore such as could be solved by the same process or method, on a closer study of details it appears that some fundamental psychological and radical differences are so great, as to make an attempt of the same experiment extremely hazardous and almost disastrous. In numerous cities, towns and even remote villages there were a number of free, fully furnished and equipped quarters ready to hospitably receive with free boarding and lodging, with all precautions for the effective concealment of prominent rebels,

BOOK I

when they were on their rounds or when they had to evade arrest. In India, at the first sight of a "wanted" suspect in any place, there will perhaps be a regular race amongst some of the people to reach the official destination and thus establish his claim for a reward as being the first informant

Such small incidents, though apparently trivial, are still of sufficient magnitude and importance to make a sane and responsible man pause, before he draws a parallel between the two countries and their problems and recommends the same method for both. Even the mild social boycott that was imposed on government officials in districts and villages in India was removed, whereas this weapon was most effectively applied in Ireland, till the last. As a result of these drastic steps on all sides, assassinations, social boycott, intimidation and other hardships, the official figures mentioned in British Parliament disclose that by middle of 1920, 556 policemen and 313 local magistrates resigned, and as no new recruits were forthcoming to fill in the vacancies created either by retirements, resignations or assassinations, the result was that R I C so far as Irish element and recruitment was concerned, was gradually annihilated, and hence the Government, being completely paralysed, had to import questionable characters, the dregs of English society, to take up this dirty job, who went beyond the original instructions given to them so as to make the name of "Black and Tans" notorious throughout the civilised world.

The only item in the national programme in which the Indians scored some points over Ireland, was in connection with the imposition of boycott of British

THE FINAL PHASE

goods in particular, during active hostility, and of foreign goods in general, during truce and normal times. Of all the constructive activities and agitation, this was the most productive of results, which could be demonstrably proved by official statistics and figures, and therefore could not be challenged even by its worst critics. All the other activities, created a great demonstrative, propagandist and educative effect, all that is essential and necessary, particularly at the initiative stage, to create mass awakening and national consciousness. The partial success in limited areas of the policy of prohibition and no-tax campaign, no doubt created financial difficulties and embarrassments for some time, which resulted in big gaps in Central and Provincial Budgets. In frankness it must be confessed that in no sense it can be said to have paralysed the existing machinery, as was the original object and function of the movement. But whilst that must be admitted, it is hoped that with equal frankness the critics of Congress will also admit that it did paralyse British commerce, particularly textile, and within a few years the import figures dwindled down to less than fifty per cent. In that respect alone we had some advantages that our Irish comrades did not enjoy. The Irish trade with Great Britain is insignificant compared with Great Britain's trade in India, and the effects of the boycott would also be in proportion to the magnitude of that trade. Besides, this was the only item in the programme that could possibly and safely be given effect to by a large majority of non-combatant Congress followers and sympathisers. Swadeshism did not involve any sacrifice, nor any risk even in the days of red-hot repression, and hence with little exertion and no suffering, almost every Indian, except with a very few extreme

BOOK I

perverse-minded loyalists, consciously or unconsciously accepted that mandate of Congress, and Capitalists too, when their patriotic spirit did not conflict with the more powerful commercial instinct, gladly responded to this call, easiest to obey, safest to follow, productive of greatest practical results, and above all satisfying both their patriotic and commercial conscience. Bombay being the biggest commercial centre and the "gate-way" for foreign trade, it was but natural that the greatest force of national energy should be concentrated there, with the result that almost all the commercial and trading associations signed the Congress pledge for Swadeshi and observed it much better, than some other pledges, more difficult to observe, and within a very short time in 1930 the most marvellous results were achieved. Millions of labourers became unemployed in Lancashire, several English mills were closed down forever, some big British firms sought protection of Insolvency Courts, others in India were brought on the verge of insolvency, Government's Customs revenues also dwindled to a considerable extent and panic prevailed both in British commercial centres and their erstwhile supporters the local and Imperial Governments. A number of ordinances, threats, cajoling, special legislations, conferences or convictions, could not retrieve the lost position. The greater the interference of the Government, the greater the resentment of the people, when ultimately Government threw off the mask, and came out openly to support the White commercial interests in India, under the thinly-veiled cloak of Law and Order.

Thus, in that one respect, Bombay can safely claim a victory even over Dublin, though in all other matters the laurels must go to our White struggling comrades. But

THE FINAL PHASE

if Dublin was not able to secure that whole-hearted co-operation and support of Irish commercial community, perhaps due to its limited scope and interference of Belfast, she was more lucky than Bombay in securing the whole-hearted sympathy and co-operation of Labour, and in a mass national movement Labour support and following is always more valuable and useful than Capitalists, though the ideal situation, particularly when the struggle is against a common foreign enemy, would be to secure the co operation and assistance of both, one would supply the sinews and the other the 'limb' for war, and thus make the national organisation complete and efficient well-supplied both with men and money In India, though Labour generally is in sympathy with the national movement led by Congress, and when given opportunity or facilities, has fully participated in demonstrative and propagandist part of its activities, still at critical junctures, the Labour Unions have not gone beyond passing resolutions of sympathy and support and we have not yet heard of a single pro-Congress strike Generally Labour organisation, instead of forming part of the national institution, are separate and independent units, sometimes even antagonistic to Congress That is rather unfortunate from a real nationalist's standpoint, and although this is neither the place nor the occasion to go deeper into the causes and the deplorable state that results, in passing we may remark, that Congress cannot be entirely exonerated from blame It is only of late that Congress has again attempted to flirt with Labour by some ineffective and milk and water resolutions, instead of adopting a bold, well-defined and radical labour policy, if possible without coming to the final breaking point with their present valuable allies, the Capitalists The

BOOK I

Congressmen have to recognise that in its present stage whilst engaged in a mighty struggle against a powerful external foe, political expediency and statesmanship demands, that there should be as much consolidation and co-ordination of all the internal resources within, but if it should come to a choice between selection of Labour or Capital, and if it is found impossible to retain both, it would certainly be more consistent and logical for Congress to retain the more valued co-operation of Labour, even at the risk of losing their gilded friends. In any mass struggle, man-power is certainly always more important than pelf-power, though as stated above, the ideal position would be to try to retain both, men and money.

In that respect, the Indian Nationalist may draw a useful lesson from the Irish struggle. Throughout the Nationalist movement their representatives, attended the Dail, the parallel organisation. Their followers freely joined the rank and file and rendered most valuable assistance at critical junctures, creating situations that immensely increased the difficulties of government and considerably helped the Nationalists in the paralysing process. To give one glaring instance, about 2,000 railwaymen, belonging to the Union, either resigned or were dismissed for flatly refusing to render any service, that would help the transport of British troops, either from England or from one Irish port to another to suppress the national upheaval. This gallant group of 2,000, included all departments of railway service, such as drivers, guards, firemen, signallers, porters and staff. Apart from the great embarrassment and difficulties, that such a move caused to authorities at most critical stages of the struggle, what a tremendous effect it is bound to

THE FINAL PHASE

-create on the mass mentality, thus giving it both a moral and material support Just contrast the attitude in India at a time when the nation is engaged in a life and death struggle in 1932, the Railwaymen's Federation here, was only agitated over some local grievances and was engaged in long and futile conferences with the authorities to get some local grievances redressed Again, we say, the fault is not of the Railwaymen or their leaders alone Well might they ask as to what the National Congress has done for the railwaymen in India The reply which is common to all such questions from Labour organisations is that Congress believes that political emancipation is the panacea for all local grievances and therefore instead of tinkering and patch work here and there, they are concentrating on one achievement, which, if attained, will remedy all other grievances Such an explanation may appeal to an intelligent student of politics, but it falls flat on illiterate class of labour masses, who naturally expect some more tangible proof, with more immediate though smaller results, to convince them of the bona-fides and sincerity of Congress

If such was the firm and aggressive attitude of railwaymen in Ireland, in spite of special regulations and safeguards, that are always provided for Public Service, we can well imagine the bolder and more militant attitude of other Labour organisations, not similarly hampered and restricted. Again there is always a close association between Labour and the lower rank and file of government departments, and incidentally Labour support, also helps to make the boycott of government menial departments more complete and effective A large number of police resignations and difficulty of fresh recruitment in Ireland, noted above, was no doubt

BOOK I

partly influenced by the favourable Labour attitude towards the national struggle. Another peculiar incident particularly connected with India, illustrates how far reaching and wide-spread is this influence of Labour participation in the national struggle. That incident also disproves the slanderous allegations that these resignations and desertions were not voluntary but coerced by the threats and intimidation of Republicans, while it is true to some extent particularly in the police-force, still there is no doubt that natural national and patriotic instincts also played a great part in influencing their decisions.

It is reported, in authentic and reliable records, that about the same time during the thick of the struggle, the Irish discontent and the spirit of revolt were not confined within the borders of Ireland, but affected Irishmen thousands of miles away, even those in India. It was but natural that, particularly Irishmen in America, should be greatly perturbed, and not only carry on a strong agitation in their own country, but several of them should even come down to Ireland, actually to join the struggle. The connection between America and Ireland was so close that such a result was perhaps natural and inevitable. But that the wave should have travelled to distant India, across stormy seas of over 6000 miles, and penetrated into closely guarded and isolated barracks, hundreds of miles interior, is a phenomenon that clearly indicates the impetuosity and all absorbing force of that national wave. An Irish regiment, Connaught Rangers, with a remarkable and clear record of great war and military service in different parts of the Empire, stationed in an out of the way military station in the Punjab, was so stirred and excited, on hearing the news of Irish-

THE FINAL PHASE

atrocities, and courage, sacrifice and sufferings of their countrymen, that one day, a large number of them, suddenly revolted as a protest. Such a large number as 350 men absolutely refused to submit to official orders became restive so much so that there was a regular skirmish in which two men were killed and several were injured. The rebellion was no doubt soon quelled. The insurrectionists were disarmed and ultimately court-martialled. Fourteen were condemned to death and a large number was sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. The death sentences against 13 of them were afterwards computed to transportation. This sensational event in our own country was naturally kept back from publicity, but created a great stir and enthusiasm in Ireland. Both from a military, as well as civil point of view it was much more serious than a similar incident on a much smaller scale in the "Gharwalli" regiment in Peshawar in 1930. The Indian soldiers had refused, out of chivalry and humane considerations, to fire on an unarmed crowd of their own countrymen. It was a conflict between unpleasant military duty and inner conscience. There was no such excuse for Connaught Rangers, who were impelled only by patriotic sentiment and spirit of revolt due to resentment.

These soldiers are mostly recruited from the masses, the same element of which Labour is composed, and such sympathy in the essential civil and military service is only possible, when Labour and Peasantry wholeheartedly join the national movement as it actually happened in Ireland.

This incident in India also belies the charge that the resignations in Ireland from police force and railway

BOOK I

were brought about by intimidation and threats, because such threats could not have reached the Connaught Rangers in the distant Punjab where they were quite secure and safe in Indian barracks, and hence, with some exceptions, we can legitimately infer that such insurrections and resignations in Ireland must also to a considerable extent, have been spontaneous and voluntary

In order to make the parallel government complete and more effective, and to have an effective control over the civic affairs also, all the Corporations, Municipalities and Local Bodies were captured and transferred entirely under the control of the Dail, so that they received instructions and guidance from that national assembly, and completely ignored 'Dublin Castle' The Mayors and the members not only usually conveyed congratulations and expressed sympathy as national occasion demanded, but even openly participated in patriotic demonstrations

Every Local Body in Ireland knew only one flag which was flown on every building, and that was the Republican National flag of Ireland To the Bombay Corporation the National Flag is like red rag to the bull, and the very sight of it in the Civic Hall irritated the 'Mayor' and his loyalist friends When the city is passing through the iron heels of most ruthless repression, and when several of their colleagues, are scandalously and most shabbily treated, like ordinary criminals for patriotic acts, the Mayor and his friends are feasting and feting the Governor and Government officials, the authors of these atrocities, in the very Civic Hall

"We charge Mr Lloyd George, the Prime Minister of England, Lord French, the Lord Lieutenant of

THE FINAL PHASE

Ireland, and other high officials of the State, including the Divisional Inspector, (who was directly responsible for the death) of deliberate and wilful murder of late Mr Thomas MacCurtain, the Mayor of Cork, and we recommend that they be indicted of this serious offence "

Such was the verdict of Dublin Coroner's Court solemnly and seriously given, after regular trial in one of the many heart-rending Irish tragedies, when the young Mayor of Cork was shot dead at night in his bed in the presence of his wife, which was one of the long series of inhuman and brutal Black and Tan atrocities. Although the atrocity was actually perpetrated by members of that Black force, still the highest officials, who had sanctioned such methods, were made equally responsible with the actual perpetrators. Contrast this with the repeated anti-Congress outbursts from the super-loyalist city-coroner of Bombay Terrence MacSwiney, who has left an indelible mark in Irish history by having endured the longest hunger strike in Irish jail and ultimately meeting the glorious end, succeeded this victim as the Mayor of Cork, he uttered the following memorable words as a part of the funeral oration "Peace and Love, those who will suffer most and not those who will inflict most, will ultimately conquer " These golden words of the Mayor were not needed by the excited and provoked citizens of Cork, and shortly after the Divisional Inspector, mentioned as one of the officers responsible for the crime, was assassinated though he had been immediately transferred to another division. Thus the citizens gave immediate effect to the coroner's verdict so far as it was within their power to execute

BOOK I

To us these illustrations only serve to show the great difference between the two, these instances from almost all conceivable institutions and departments, official and non-official, such as resignations of 2000 railwaymen, police and magistracy, revolt of the military in India, the attitude of Municipalities and Coroners' jury, give us an idea of the great hold of the national sentiment on all sections of the people, and the absolutely helpless and isolated situation of the Government. When we consider that situation in Ireland, shortly before the final settlement, we cannot help feeling and confessing that Indian National Congress, in spite of its recent achievement and glorious efforts when it successfully resisted more than one attempt to crush it, has still left a great deal undone, particularly in the direction of Labour and mass movement. There is a good deal of spade-work to be done in villages and factories, that will have to be seriously and earnestly undertaken, before it can honestly claim to represent the masses, in the sense that Sinn-Fein in Ireland, Wafdists in Egypt, Kemalists in Turkey, Leninists in Russia, or even 'Kuomintang' in China claim. That means less of noisy, demonstrative and propagandist activities in large cities, and more of solid, educative and substantial work in villages. A national movement cannot sustain very long, with the support of intelligentsia or middle-class businessmen, and even capitalists and commercialists, alone. The experience of modern political history teaches us, that unless it catches the imagination and influences the mass-psychology of the lowest strata of society, spreading its influence and power in the remotest nook and corner,

THE FINAL PHASE

and becomes so wide-spread, as to affect at least 90 per cent of the population, it can neither be sufficiently effective nor lasting, to outlive the repeated ruthless attacks of bureaucracy and survive long enough, ultimately to achieve its goal. That does not mean that 90 per cent or more of the population should be all active members of the national organisation. Again a study of all modern movements teaches us, that in all countries, where ultimate success was achieved the actual percentage of membership of active workers, even during the most critical and final stage, never went beyond 10 or 15 per cent, of the population, the most remarkable instance being that of Bolsheviki in Russia. Even in the final October Revolution of 1917, the actual membership of Communist Party, the party in power, responsible for the final success, did not exceed 2 or 3 per cent of the working class or peasant population. Though that country, like India, is very large in area and with a large, majority of agriculturists, still the peasant membership of the party was even lower than the working class, perhaps not more than 2 or 3 per cent. So also with the nationalists of Turkey or Sinn-Fien in Ireland and Republicans in China. The reason is clear. A very large percentage may be in full sympathy, may equally keenly desire the change, and would welcome the new regime and subscribe both to the goal and creed of the party, but only a small percentage is actually prepared, even in normal times, to undergo the hardship and strict party discipline, or be prepared for the actual sacrifice and suffering at the time of the upheaval. Nevertheless, if they all are sincere sympathisers and genuinely desire the change, whether they are members of the party or not,

BOOK I

they will be swept away spontaneously with the general national wave and find themselves, perhaps unconsciously in the thick of the struggle before they have realised the situation

As regards the intervening period of blood-shed and terrorism on both sides in Ireland, the dark and distressful events are too recent to need repetition at this stage. For months and months the newspapers in the world were full of some sensational reports from that unhappy land,—a mayor shot dead in his bed, republicans retaliated limb for limb and life for life, government offices and institutions reduced to ashes, towns sacked by Black and Tans to avenge the outrages, public streets and parks converted into battle-fields, daring hold-ups, sensational escapes, the Governor-General and staff practically imprisoned in the Dublin Castle, as much as national leaders incarcerated in British prisons—in short a most systematic, ruthless, relentless, well-organised and dare-devil guerilla warfare lasting for nearly three years, such as modern political history has no parallel in the world, and perhaps one will search in vain to find its equal, even in ancient histories of mass revolutions. We can quote only a few concrete instances to show the desperate length to which both sides were driven, and how both were evolving round a vicious circle. The longer they remained entangled, the more difficult they found to extricate. The repressive measures of government first called for popular resentment and retaliation. These popular outrages, undertaken in a spirit of revenge and resentment, again called for more drastic measures from government, which again led to more ruthless acts of retaliation on the part of the people. Thus round and

THE FINAL PHASE

round, the vicious circle went on, resulting in terrible disaster on both sides, daily increasing the bitterness between the two races and countries, and spreading universal distress and calamity all round

The few concrete instances, we will select, will be with a view to show some parallels in a much smaller scale in India. The terrorists' methods are practically similar all round, but some phases are peculiar on both sides in the fight against British Imperialism. First of all in 1917-18 at the initiative stage, when on account of the proposed Conscription Act whole Ireland was stirred and roused to action, and all parties united against the British, it was necessary for the authorities to take drastic measures to suppress the rising tide. However as the agitation against the Conscription Act was perfectly legitimate and could not give much scope for severe repression, a hoax had to be invented to strengthen the hands of the authorities, by creating a strong prejudice against the agitators and discrediting the national movement. Hence suddenly, the authorities discovered a secret "German" plot, and under that pretext a general round up of all prominent agitators was effected. As an open trial would 'prejudice' and "endanger" "public safety" they were all detained under the "Defence of the Realm" Act for a long time without trial. The repeated challenge, even to prove a plot in an open trial, was not accepted, and no heed was paid to the protests, that the supposed 'plot' was a mere hoax, manufactured to justify and facilitate action against anti-Conscription agitators, which would otherwise have been difficult under the normal law and procedure. Even the then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland who had just retired, publicly denied all knowledge of any

BOOK I

such plot during his tenure, and ultimately the mask was removed and it turned out to be a mere pretext for drastic action

Do we not hear of similar alarming reports of supposed secret activities either of the Red-Shirts on the Frontier, where a secret alliance is alleged with hostile tribal chiefs, allegations that are never proved though repeatedly challenged. Nevertheless they are deemed sufficient to take drastic action without trial against political leaders and rank and file.

Again, another parallel is supplied in instances of sacking of whole towns and indiscriminate destruction of property and injury to lives of absolutely innocent citizens of a particular community, either to wreak vengeance for an outrage on officials, committed within the Municipal limits of such towns, or terrorise the whole population. The ruthless repression experienced by the unfortunate Hindu population of Chittagong and Dacca, after the assassination of a police officer, was a mere repetition of exactly similar disgraceful scenes, witnessed in several towns in Ireland, where police, helped by few Protestants and riff-raffs of the town, ransacked whole peaceful areas, destroying lives and properties of absolutely innocent Catholic inhabitants, who had no connection whatsoever with the alleged outrages on officials. The most glaring and outrageous instance of such sacking was with regard to the city of Cork, that was considered the "Chittagong" of Ireland. This was in November 1920, as reprisal for the murder of fourteen officers. The methods, means and instruments employed in both countries were practically the same, with nearly the same results, though the damage to Irish town was more serious and more wide-spread than in towns

THE FINAL PHASE

in Bengal One remarkable instance is worth a special mention On 21st November 1920, fourteen police officers were assassinated on the outskirts of Dublin, and the assassins were arrested on the spot and secured. Still, immediately after, armed police with Black and Tans rushed in motor lorries, doing considerable damage to life and property, at another end of the town, miles away from the place of outrage, a large crowd had collected to witness a foot-ball match, without any warning and without any cause or provocation, they started firing on the innocent crowd of spectators that were witnessing the game, none of them being even aware of the outrage on officials at the other end. There was a terrible confusion and stampede. Fourteen innocent young lives were lost and sixty people were injured, besides killing and wounding some more in the town. It was long after the trouble subsided, that the people were appraised of the cause that led to this sudden and unprovoked attack. This day is still observed in Ireland as Bloody Sunday. Luckily in India, the reprisal outrages have not gone to such lengths and invaded innocent crowds of spectators in our cricket or foot-ball matches. Still we hear of Britishers being considered as good 'sport' and fair "gamsters". As in India, inquiry reports into these affairs were never published.

Although, we occasionally hear in India of some Police officials, here and there, requisitioning the services of "Mawalis" or, "goondas" to deal with the irrepressible politicals,—more particularly such hirelings are useful in secret services and at times they make excellent *agents provocateur*,—to give the devil his due, the Irish authorities beat hollow the comparatively still

untrained and raw officialdom in India in these methods of jail birds' recruitment. The national secret service, the Sinn-Fein C I D of Ireland, have unearthed some disgraceful plots that make the authorities blush with shame even now over 10 years after the "establishment of peace." Dublin Castle's official post was often intercepted by the efficient espionage system of Sinn-Fein parallel government, as the nationalists' post was invariably censured by Dublin Post Office, and we dare say on both sides sometimes there were interesting and sensational disclosures. The biographies and histories of national leaders and struggle have reproduced some of the specimen, one or two of which are worth quoting here, both for the edification of Indian nationalists and Indian Police.

One Goading, a damaged and dangerous character, with several years' convictions to his credit, was undergoing a sentence of five years for forgery in a British gaol. Shortly after his conviction, he addressed a letter, through jail authorities, to Lord French, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, offering his whole-hearted services to Dublin authorities for any "Job" against Sinn-Feinism. Shortly after, he was released and sent to Ireland and joined the Black and Tan gang. However, his letter from jail was intercepted, and close watch was kept on him by Irish Republican Volunteers, after he was imported into Ireland. One day he was accosted and warned that unless he left the gang immediately, he would lose his life, though he had so ignominiously and disgracefully bought his liberty. Like a discreet and wise man, he quietly and clandestinely deserted the rank and escaped, retaining both his life and liberty, thus managing to secure his release shortly after his

THE FINAL PHASE

conviction for 5 years This was one of many such instances that accidentally came to light, numerous others passing undetected

Another instance of a similar nature, throwing some light on the Irish police methods, was also brought to light about the same time, end of 1919 One H W Quinn or (Quinlisk), an ex-soldier, had at first joined the rank of Republicans, however, some secret service agents, believing him to be a good material for tapping, decoyed and lured him with tempting promises into Dublin Castle There he was promised high rewards, and complete protection, if he turned a traitor and helped the authorities to trace some prominent leaders, particularly Michael Collins, and also gave false evidence to secure his execution Some how or other, some hitch occurred in the terms, and being apparently dissatisfied with his new patrons, he again turned to his old friends, the Republicans, and disclosed his exploits with the Castle authorities He openly issued a statement over his signature, fully exposing these facts and challenged the authorities to disprove them, and sent it for publication to Freeman's Journal Perhaps the original document is still in the old files of the said Journal

Treatment of political prisoners is another aspect that discloses both uniform attitude of British Imperialism towards their political opponents and also the similarity of methods adopted both in India and Ireland to redress the said grievances In all civilised modern administrations, it is a well recognised International convention, that politicals, as a class are to be considered and treated apart from ordinary criminals, that beyond restraint on their liberty and deprivation of all opportunities to

BOOK I

indulge in hostile political agitation and atrocities, it is not found necessary to impose needless humiliation and hardships such as are inflicted as deterrent on ordinary hardened criminals, convicted of offences involving both moral turpitude and menace to life and property. In India the situation is aggravated by the eternal discrimination between the rulers and the ruled. In almost every walk and sphere of life, political, social and general, the insulting signboard "Reserved for Europeans" assail the Indian eyes and wound the Indian feelings. Beginning with social institutions like clubs, hotels and swimming baths, right upto hospitals, educational institutions and even railway premises and compartments, and it has extended to reservation of certain government posts and privileges, and even God, desirous of fulfilling their desires for segregation and separation, has reserved some black ailments and diseases only for the white population of the country. No wonder that this quarantine infection should infest even Law Courts necessitating special procedure for white criminals and even the prison walls, resulting in special treatment to Christian criminals of the exalted ruling class. A visitor to Indian prisons will always find a board "European Ward", slicing off the best area within the high walls, with some special amenities, facilities and generally observing higher standard, than that provided for the rest. Very often a most respected, cultured and educated citizen, possessing a high social and civic status and convicted of a political offence, receives worse treatment in an Indian jail, than that meted out to white riff-raff vagrants from the lowest strata of society, convicted of serious crimes like theft, dacoity or even manslaughter.

THE FINAL PHASE

It appears that the position in Ireland was the same till 1917-18 when no distinction was made between criminals and politicals

Tom Ash in Ireland and Satin Sen in India were the first martyrs who sacrificed their lives in prisons to improve the lot of their surviving comrades. Tom Ash was convicted of a political crime of having taken part in the 1916 Easter Rebellion. He objected to being treated like an ordinary convict. As a protest, he went on hunger strike, the same weapon adopted in India later on. Tom Ash went without food for 5 days, when the jail authorities as a penalty for breach of jail discipline, deprived him of his clothes, bedding and even boots, so that he was made to lie practically naked on damp floor for some hours. He fell ill, got an attack of pneumonia and died within a few days. This tremendous sacrifice of a promising educated Irish youth caused a stir in the whole country, and a wave of indignation and resentment against the callousness and cruelty of the authorities that literally caused his premature end, spread from one end of the country to another. The martyrdom of Tom Ash secured the much needed reform, and politicals as a class, received different treatment from ordinary criminals.

Some time after that, Terrence MacSwiney, Mayor of Cork, went on hunger strike in a British prison as a protest against bad treatment. He sacrificed his life after 75 days' suffering, causing a sensation throughout the civilised world. His body, whilst being carried by his friends to Dublin to accord the honour of a public funeral, was forcibly seized by the military and was privately disposed of in Cork.

Both these records were broken by the Indian martyr Satin Sen, whose flesh and bone skeleton

BOOK I

sustained for a longer period without food. But when Irish authorities were compelled to recognise politicals as a separate class, the more grudging and less sympathetic administration in India, refused to recognise politicals as a separate class, but have based the classification on general status and financial position of the person outside the jail and retained the special privilege for the white vagrants and criminals as before, so that the strange anomaly still exists in Indian prisons, which is not possible in any other modern civilised administration, viz, a political prisoner of higher education and standing is classed in a lower division than a thief or dacoit in the special European ward

De Valera, who is so prominently visible today on the Irish political horizon, first came into lime-light as one of the detainees after the 1916 Easter Rebellion, and his career first as the leader of political prisoners in detention camps and prisons, fighting their battles successfully against jail authorities, and setting an intrepid example of sensational escapes. In that respect the Irish prisoners differed considerably from Indian Satyagrahis. Though they would not recognise British Courts of Law, before which they were tried and took no part in proceedings, still after conviction, unlike Indian politicals, they gave no peace or rest either to prison authorities or the rulers outside, at times wholesale escapes in batches of 10 or 20 puzzled the authorities and amazed the public

After his election as President of the first Dail during the greater part of the last stage of acute national crisis from 1918 to 1921, DeValera was in America engaged in raising loans and other important publicity

THE FINAL PHASE

and propaganda work. In this respect, the attitude of Indian leaders fundamentally differs from leaders of other modern mass movements. In India, throughout the crisis, the leaders, not only remained at the helm but, at the first opportunity threw themselves headlong into the fray and sought arrest, whereas in all other national revolutions, it was always considered more discreet and wise to keep the leaders out, with a view to guide and direct the movement till the end.

As soon as the open breach between Kerensky's Provisional Government and Communists became imminent in Russia in 1917, Lenin, with his group, escaped to Finland and kept himself in touch with the events in Russia. He sent constant instructions and directions from his seat of safety and security, and returned only after the tables were turned and Bolsheviks were considered strong enough to assume power.

Sun-Yat-Sen similarly escaped at the nick of time, and spent most of his time in America, Japan and on the Continent, carrying on propaganda on behalf of the national movement in China, when his followers were engaged in bitter and bloody struggle with the forces of Imperialism in the country and returned just in time to assume directions after the victory. So also Kemal Pasha and his party, with Sultan's decrees of death against them, kept themselves securely entrenched in Angora, away from the capital, till they felt strong enough to assume power and successfully defy the Stamboul authorities. Zaghlul, after his release from Malta, spent considerable time in Paris, engaged in propaganda work there, when his Wafdists' party was struggling against the forces of reaction in Egypt, and returned just in time to assume charge of Premiership.

BOOK I

Even in little Poland, Paderesky spent most of his time in America, carrying on vigorous propaganda and succeeding in gaining the sympathy of President Wilson and American people, so that President Wilson included a special clause for Polish Independence in his famous fourteen points. Clause XIII of President Wilson's points read —

“ An Independent Polish State should be created which should include the territory inhabited by indisputably Polish population which should be assured free and secure access to the sea and whose political and economical independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed ”

Thus in all modern political struggles, international publicity and propaganda, particularly in America, has been one of the main items of national activity, and this policy has achieved remarkable success, at least in three instances, China, Poland and Ireland. Particularly with regard to Ireland, it would be no exaggeration to say that American public opinion, co-operation, sympathy and active material assistance played an important part in the final solution of the Irish problem. There were branches in all important towns in America of Irish Republican institutions, with press and platform propaganda, and the influential American deputation to Ireland and France, presided over by an eminent American judge, greatly helped the Irish cause and counter-acted the effects of false and pernicious anti-national propaganda, conducted by virile British Tory press and people. They ruthlessly exposed some of the darkest and disgraceful British methods in Ireland, and created such a strong world opinion in favour of Ireland, as to make it impossible or difficult for British statesmen and Parliament to resist. It is neither wise nor safe-

THE FINAL PHASE

entirely to discard the British Publicity and anti-national propaganda bureau, one of the most notorious and powerful in the world, and it is quite essential for nations struggling against British Imperialism, to make every endeavour to counteract its pernicious and mischievous effects

Unfortunately in India the reverse policy is adopted, and whatever little efforts were made, were completely discontinued, just when the Indian struggle reached a critical stage. Though ultimately India must and will have to depend upon herself and her sacrifices for the final redemption, still, under the modern conditions, no national movement of importance, can entirely ignore world opinion or afford to discard, whatever outside help and co-operation and sympathy that may be available, particularly from such friendly and well-inclined countries like America

Before we come to the final and most important phase of negotiations in the Irish struggle, we may, in passing, refer to one episode that bears a strong resemblance to happenings in India. Just as in Bombay, the centre of political activities, in the thick of the struggle in 1932, there suddenly and inexplicably broke out most intense and bitter communal riots, causing compulsory suspension of national activities for some days, so also at an acute stage in the Irish struggle, there suddenly burst out a terrible communal outburst between Protestants and Catholics at Belfast, similarly lasting for some days, and, as in Bombay, necessitating wholesale removal of different sections of population to safer areas, and more remarkable still, the Belfast riots furnished additional arguments for separation of Ulster, just as in India communal riots were used to support the arguments for special safeguards to minorities and separate electorates

Strange coincidences do occur in national struggles.

CHAPTER IX.

The Final Phase—Negotiations and After.

The final phase of the Irish struggle becomes most interesting and instructive from the Indian point of view, because it reads like the report of current political events in India, beginning with the critical and acute stage, from 1930 onwards. We have only to substitute some names, such as Lloyd George who was the Prime Minister then instead of MacDonald, DeValera instead of Mahatma Gandhi, and Irish Dail instead of Indian National Congress. Lord French was to play the role of the strong man of Ireland as Lord Willingdon aspires to rank amongst fraternity of the "Mailed Fists" for India.

We need not go over the same ground again as we have already attempted in previous pages to show the origin, motive and result of the British Imperial policy of repression, all disclosing the same mentality, no matter whether a pseudo-socialist like MacDonald is at the head, or the destinies of the Empire are with the so-called Liberals or toadies. For Imperial politics and maintenance of British domination, they are all one, with perhaps a little difference in the degree of Imperialism. With the rising nationalism, and awakened consciousness of Ireland, they started the same Imperial experiment in 1918-1921 as they are experimenting with the Indian problem to-day, few years after. Apparently the valuable and useful lessons of Ireland, learnt at such tremendous costs, are entirely lost. True to their old adage, the Imperialist politicians and statesmen will "learn nothing and forget nothing," they repeat the same blunders, create the same bunglings and make

THE FINAL PHASE NEGOTIATIONS

the same mess over and over again with the same disastrous results

The militarist aggressive Tories and die-hards conceived the same idea about Irish nationalism as the Churchillian gang feels to-day about India "The only remedy to suppress this rising tide is to give absolute free hand for some time at least, to supposed infallible "tin-gods" on the spot There should be no interference with the local authorities They should be absolutely deaf to all public protests, absolutely indifferent to all public opinion They should only keep rigorously to the path of repression chalked out, and within six or eight months the situation would completely change The nationalism will be completely wiped out A new Ireland with the old loyalty will be again revived, and the century old, apparently insoluble, problem will be solved in less than a year Only let repression, unadulterated rank repression, have a sufficiently free scope for some months, and all these magical results are inevitable "

It was with these fantastic ideas that Lord French, the great military commander, was sent, as both the civil and military head of the administration, to play the part of an unrestrained autocrat, a fight to a finish, with gloves off They never realised that there are two parties to a game, and the opposing team can also play, when the time comes, particularly when driven to a corner, with vigour, zeal, enthusiasm, courage and a spirit of sacrifice, that is only possible for human beings fighting for their freedom, particularly when they are driven to desperation and hemmed in The results, though natural, were still unexpected so far as British Imperialists were concerned The terrorists' move, from a little

BOOK I

hitherto unnoticed and insignificant point, burst into a general blaze within a few months. Nationalism and Republicanism, instead of being suppressed, grew like a giant, with hydra-heads upsetting all their predictions, as on most pessimistic calculations, giving the longest rope to the movement, it was confidently predicted that by 1920 Xmas the Dail and Sinn-Feinism would be completely crushed, and the people of Ireland would be cowed down and defeated, and they would come down on their knees knocking at Westminster, and humbly sue for peace. That would be the psychological moment for the British Imperialist victors, to dictate their terms and fling the old "Home Rule" Bill at them, a Bill that was hanging fire for years. Then the British Lion could proudly strut about with an air of superiority and generosity, to prove to the world how sympathetically they treat even a vanquished and crushed political foe. It was with such day-dreams and delusions, that Lloyd George and party in England were anxiously awaiting the approach of Old Father 'Xmas in 1920, with the same childish keenness, that children display for the expected 'Xmas toys and sweets. It was with such mistaken beliefs and misapprehensions, that they turned an absolutely deaf ear to all warnings and protests, both from friends at home and abroad, who warned them that the events in Ireland were drifting in the wrong direction and that the position would be irretrievable, if not restored in good time. The scheduled time, the fateful 'Xmas of 1920, had not arrived, and till then they would stick to their promise and original programme, not to interfere with the autocrats on the spot, but give them all moral and material support they needed to put through the experiment successfully.

THE FINAL PHASE NEGOTIATIONS

However, the 1920 'Xmas came and even the 1921 New Year was ushered in, but the promised land, the expected goal, did not arrive. On the contrary, worst orgies were perpetrated even after this period, thus dawning on the "wise men of Gotham" at Westminster, that instead of slaying the Irish giant, the ghost was very much alive and still giving terrible kicks. Thanks to the narrow imperialist outlook and faith in the antiquated and exploded methods of repression, the situation was most embarrassing and critical. Peace was earnestly desired and keenly sought for, otherwise the situation was daily growing worse and would soon go beyond absolute control. The old phantom "Prestige" was the only obstacle in the way. After such bombastic and bluffing declarations, holding out open threats and promises to crush the movement in few months, with what face could they approach the enemy? To admit defeat and sue for peace, would, in spite of all British hypocrisy and diplomacy, only be construed by the world at large as an ignoble confession of miserable failure, and further admission of a mistaken blundering policy, such a pill was too bitter for the British to swallow. Hence to save this extremely humiliating and uncomfortable situation, and to preserve British Prestige, which is a commodity of greater value than any merchandise or treasure, it was necessary, at least outwardly, to keep up the volte-face, at the same time, make use of the secret diplomacy for which Britishers are so famous. So, for months a most interesting situation continued. On the one hand there was the same apparent bluff and bluster, the same silly talk of crushing and extinction, the same threat and defiance, though simultaneously actual secret negotiations continued behind the prison bars, trying to find a

BOOK I

suitable face-saving loop-hole for escape DeValera, as previously stated, was in America Michael Collins, the resourceful brain and strong arm behind the Republican movement, though free, was considered difficult to approach, and was also believed to be hot-headed and irreconcilable, from whom no hopeful results could be expected In short, he was the "Jawahar" of Ireland Hence their attention was naturally turned to Arthur Griffiths, the Vice-President, a man of balanced mind and more sober views, better suited, temperamentally and psychologically, for the purpose of starting peace-negotiations He was removed from Irish jail to a British prison in England, thus separating him from his more dangerous and less reasonable colleagues For some time, he was treated with special consideration in British prison, so as to remove the evil effects of bitterness and ill-will, and thus prepare a proper atmosphere for reception of a "mutual friendly" feeling As religious-minded Griffiths could be best influenced by the religious head, Arch-Bishop Clieu was first selected to broach the subject in jail Of course he was not "sent" by the authorities He "had come of his own accord as a mutual friend" to save his Christian "flock" from shedding "Christian" blood, nor had the transfer to British jail anything to do with the interview It was only a lucky and timely "accident" However, the first divine mission was not very successful Griffiths turned out to be a harder nut to crack than was anticipated, and he made the only reply that was possible for a patriot to make He referred the Prelatarian messenger, and his worldly clients behind the scene, to the only authority in Ireland that was recognised and functioning The Dail alone had the power to negotiate, particularly

THE FINAL PHASE NEGOTIATIONS

in the absence of the President Though frustrated in the first attempt, the "Welsh Wizard" once being convinced of the necessity of restoring peace, was not to be so easily foisted Maintaining the same outward appearance of threat and defiance, his secret efforts continued to find another outlet for this escape, and sometime after, selected a diplomat of international repute, General Smutts of South Africa fame to take a bolder and more forward step of seeing DeValera himself, without whom, it was as difficult to negotiate, as it is impossible to open peace-terms without Mahatma Gandhi in India It is a curious coincidence that the same messengers of peace were interested in restoring peaceful relations between England and India, and both Arch-Bishop of Canterbury and General Smutts had interviewed Mahatma in England and issued a public appeal for peace with India

However, DeValera, as was expected, was a harder nut to crack than Griffiths As the head of a *de facto* "Parallel" Government, he must act in a more business-like and dignified manner Whilst much appreciating the kind attitude and sympathetic concern of their 'mutual' friends he "cannot take official notice of their moves", unless a communication to that effect came, even in a demi-official form, from the head of the British Cabinet, addressed to him personally as the head of the Irish 'State'

With this stiff, though absolutely correct and consistent attitude, there was no escape but to submit to the inevitable For once the mighty British Empire must bend before a "contemptible" rebel, who had often escaped from British jail, and for whose blood they were thirsting The situation must be saved at all costs, even

BOOK I

at the sacrifice of that precious Imperial "jewel", the British prestige, and meekly pocketing the national humiliation and insult, the British Cabinet, for once displayed wisdom and statesmanship, and on 24th June 1921, Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, wrote first and direct to Mr. E. DeValera, President of Irish Dail, cordially inviting him, as the acknowledged representative of the people of Ireland, to a conference in England and appealing for peace, harmony and good-will. Thus in spite of repeated declarations,—“No bargain with the rebels, no negotiations with the outlaws, we can only confer with constitutionalists, no quarters for direct-actionists, who believe in the philosophy of force”—this arch-rebel head of “Parallel” Government, a murderous organisation responsible for hundreds of British lives and damage to millions of State property, was approached direct by the Prime Minister, over the head of local bureaucrats who were still pursuing the wild-geese-chase in Dublin. What an outrage on Willingdon-Hoare sentiment! Poor pigmies only 10 years ago, too insignificant to be consulted on important Imperial affairs, Had they a voice then as now? Would they ever have permitted such “disgraceful” surrender, such short sighted blunder? Would they not have rather preferred an important slice crumbling off the Empire, as their worthy predecessors did over a century ago in case of North America, than yield to political “agitators” and thus deal a serious blow to Imperial prestige and British prowess? However, the destinies of the Empire were then wiser, greater and broader minds. Luckily for Great Britain, Willingdon-Hoare “cut-the-nose-to-spite-the-face” politics did not prevail, and within a few hours, the cordial invitation was gracefully

THE FINAL PHASE NEGOTIATIONS

accepted, and DeValera, instead of mounting the black gallows, was stepping into the gorgeous and hospitable British Palace, shaking hands, instead of throttling throats. Truly it is said that if you fail you are dubbed and hanged as a rebel, if you succeed, you are welcomed as a ruler. The convicts of yesterday become the administrators of to-day. However, before the truce was signed and declared finally on 11th July 1921, there were serious difficulties, raised as usual by the local bureaucrats, who insisted upon complete disarming of all Irish Volunteers as an essential condition precedent to truce. DeValera could never submit to such terms, as pending negotiations it could only be suspension of hostilities, and both sides must remain '*status quo ante bellum*'. If Irish officialdom had the same influence and power as is enjoyed by the White "Steel-frame" in India, on this preliminary issue alone, the negotiations would have "collapsed," but again wiser counsels prevailed in the Cabinet, and the "ship of peace" was allowed to proceed further by conceding to the Irish demand. Contrast this attitude with unreasonable demand for undertaking from Malia handy. At a later stage of the voyage, further more serious and complete ship-wreck was saved,—this time by a little knack and statesmanship on Irish side. Before the Irish Peace Delegation could proceed to England to settle the final peace-terms, a serious question arose as regards their status. DeValera and Dail insisted that they should be described as representing "Sovereign Independent State" of Ireland, thus compelling the Cabinet, even before the conference started, to acknowledge complete Independence and Republic of Ireland, outside the Empire. On this point it was impossible, even for conciliatory Lloyd George and his Cabinet, to

BOOK I

yield There was a limit beyond which, consistently with their position and responsibility they could not go The utmost that Lloyd George could go was to describe them as "Chosen and accredited representatives of the people of Ireland " Ultimately, the Dail and DeValera had to yield, rather than take it to the breaking point, and adopted a *via media* phraseology, somewhat similar to one accepted by Mahatma Gandhi, and described the position as "Free association of countries and nations, with British Commonwealth as head, under certain well-defined sense and conditions " This attitude, from the beginning, was the origin of the "Irish Oath" controversy that had reached an interesting development in 1932-33

Thus, by a policy of give-and-take on both sides, and with statesmanship and political knack, the ship of peace was skilfully navigated through troubled waters, safely weathering many storms, at times narrowly escaping wreck, only on account of clever manoeuvring

As noted above, in 1919 Lord Allenby in Egypt had similarly yielded to public agitation and recalled Zaghlul from his enforced exile, shortly after his deportation, in spite of threats and bluff to crush the "Wafdists " So there is nothing fixed or "settled " in British or any other politics Many "settled " facts are unsettled and fixed policies quickly changed, if only the other side can exercise sufficient grit and strength to bend what appears to be unbendable Will not India learn a valuable lesson from these two very recent instances under the Empire ? Egypt and Ireland have illustrated what unity of all political parties and religious communities can achieve It is but natural and to be expected that in a country so vast and populous with diversity of race,

THE FINAL PHASE NEGOTIATIONS

religion and creed, a conglomeration of different cultures and traditions, normally there should be serious differences of opinion, social, political and religious, leading to disharmony and even friction. Such differences exist in all countries and all nations. The Wafdists and Liberals in Egypt were at logger-heads as Sinn-Feiners and Redmondites were poles apart. But in all countries, and with all nations, there comes a crisis, an external menace, a common danger, when all internal differences and domestic and political quarrels are forgotten, and a united front is presented to the common enemy. Almost all modern nations have passed through such national crisis safely, because they have risen to the fullest heights on such occasion and sailed safely through the stormy seas and tumultuous weather determined to sink or swim together. After reaching the other shore safely, and after the disappearance of the common enemy, the communal and sectional interest again arise, and restore the original differences and disagreements once again. India is at present passing through such a national crisis. Will she alone be a deplorable and tragic exception to the general rule? Let us hope and pray that she too will emulate the glorious example of other nations, similarly circumstanced, and come out of the ordeal as triumphantly and gloriously, as the most forward nations of the world.

In the meantime let us revert to the original theme. We have come to that stage in Ireland, which will correspond to the Round Table Conference period in India, with this difference that there was no question of nomination of delegates by the Government. There was only one political party recognised by whole Ireland (South). The Dail by its superb organisation, tremendous

sacrifice, compact discipline and unyielding courage, had deservedly acquired the enviable position of the only national assembly, not only acknowledged by all sections of the people, but also recognised as such by the British Government. The Dail selected its delegation and gave its representatives the mandate. The Dail ultimately decided by the majority, after months of debate and discussion, the final acceptance of the draft Treaty, and the same Dail became the "Provisional" Government for 12 months and assumed charge of the government of the country as Free State of Ireland. The point to be noted is that every little important detail was referred to or settled by the general body and not by the Council or Cabinet of Ministers alone. In the matter of negotiations, the Dail was considered the only final and supreme authority, without whose approval it was impossible to take any important step.

This procedure, which is more democratic and constitutional, is to be preferred in all national struggles, whenever and wherever it is possible and feasible. Unfortunately in India, partly due to peculiar difficulties and partly for want of inclination, the present tendency seems to be to depart from that healthy procedure. A. I. C. C. (All-India Congress Committee) would correspond to the Dail just as W. C. (Working Committee) of Congress would be its Ministry and Cabinet. As DeValera, the President, was unwilling to join the Irish delegation, probably because its independent Republican status was not recognised, the Irish delegation was in charge of Arthur Griffiths, the Vice-President with Michael Collins (representing the extreme left-wing of Republicans), and Boston, Duggan and Duffy, with Childers as secretary, whereas the British

THE FINAL PHASE NEGOTIATIONS

Cabinet was represented by Lloyd George, A Chamberlain, Birkenhead, W Churchill, Sir S Evans and Sir H. Greenwood, with G Howell as Attorney-General

The discussions were to be informal with no regular chairman or agenda Griffiths was the principal spokesman on Irish side as Lloyd George advocated the British cause All the parties of British Parliament did not claim separate representation as in Indian Round Table Conference, nor was there any question of special representation for British commercial or any other interests in Ireland The Dublin authorities, corresponding to the Government of India, were completely ignored, but Sir Craigie represented the interests of Ulster (North Ireland) The conference commenced in October 1921

On 25th November, the Dail Ministry passed a resolution that "Ireland shall recognise the British Commonwealth for the purpose of association as symbol, an accepted head of combination of associated heads" Statesmanship and wisdom demanded that much yielding and departure from the original position and goal of complete independence and republic, since the British Cabinet firmly refused to negotiate on that basis The discussions of the conference were confined only to the few fundamentally important points of differences, between the two countries, to be embodied in a draft-treaty between the two nations, and had no reference to the future internal constitution for Ireland That was a matter for Irishmen alone to decide, and the function of the British Parliament and the Cabinet was to pass the Irish Bill as settled and approved by the Irish people, subject of course to the fundamentals agreed to in the draft-treaty The actual form of government, franchise,

BOOK I

strength and nature of legislatures, relations of executive to the parliament, finance, defence and such other important issues were settled entirely according to Irish decisions, unhampered by any outside interference. That was the self-determination not only with regard to Ireland, but with all other Dominions including Canada, Australia and South Africa, whose National Assemblies settled their own constitutions, and only as a matter of form forwarded the same to British Parliament to be drafted and put through, without any material amendments or alterations. In some cases, minor amendments suggested by the British Cabinet were rejected by the Colonies, and had to be given up in the final bill. That was also practically the position with regard to the Egyptian constitution in 1920. One has only to compare that situation, which may rightly be described as self-determination, to the extremely humiliating and impotent position of Indian delegates to the London R T C. and Joint Parliamentary Committee, to appreciate the difference and the discrimination in treatment to Brown India and the White Colonies, the supposed "equality of status", so much prized by the Indian delegates, existed only in their imagination. Paramountcy of British Parliament as the ultimate deciding factor, was the galling, painful and humiliating fact that was so glaringly transparent through all the mask of hypocrisy, insincerity and unreality. What other country but India, could have tolerated such a hopeless position, coupled with the additional affront of 'nominated representatives' of the people. Nomination by a foreign bureaucracy is by itself a direct negation to its representative character, and their discriminating treatment becomes all the more aggravating and provoking, when

THE FINAL PHASE NEGOTIATIONS

we realise that India is larger in area and population than all the colonies and British possessions, including the supposed Mother country, put together, and can boast of a more ancient culture, civilisation and religion than any of them

Such are the national calamities, depressing tragedies and agonising humiliations of a divided house. Unity would not only restore to her the control of her own destinies at Home, but would also enhance her prestige and reputation in the world including British Empire

Again apologising for the little digression, we will revert to the original topic. The British-Irish conference lasted for several months, and during all that period, the Irish delegates, as far as possible, confined themselves only to the official business that had brought them on the hostile soil. Though the discussions were most acrimonious and rigid, each side rigorously adhering to its point, still on the whole cordial personal relations were maintained between the parties, throughout the long discussions. The Irish delegation rigidly avoided all alluring social and official functions, and more or less maintained an isolated, strictly Irish existence outside, even their personal and menial staff consisted of Irishmen only, imported from Ireland.

The most acute difference existed on the question of separation of Ulster, the Irish delegation insisting on Union as *sine qua non* Ulster, backed by British Parliament, adopted a most adamant attitude, like some of our communalist friends here on the question of separate electorate, and the Irish delegation had ultimately to yield, to avoid final rupture and accept separation, in the hope, that it would only be a temporary

BOOK I

arrangement, during the transitory period, and that wiser counsels would prevail after five or ten years, a hope in which they were destined to be disappointed, because experience of human affairs teaches us that, "once a separation, always a separation," and time, instead of bridging the gulf, makes it wider. Similar disappointment, perhaps awaits Indian Nationalists, who accept the pernicious principle of separate electorates 'only' as a temporary expediency. However, it must be admitted that Indian situation is, in this respect at least, much better than Ireland. Even the rankest communalist for the present, is only satisfied with the safeguard of separate electorate and has not put forward fantastic claim like Ulster to be completely sliced off in a separate and independent state outside Indian Central Government and directly under British Parliament. We may derive some consolation, though very poor, from this difference.

The other bone of contention was the "Oath" question, which was part of a larger issue of "within" or "without" the Empire. In that too, to avoid final breach, the Irish delegation yielded and accepted a *via media* compromise draft, which was as follows, dictated to Boston by DeValera in December 1921 —

"I do swear to bear true faith and allegiance to the constitution of Ireland, and the treaty of Association of Ireland, with the British Commonwealth of Nations, and to recognise the King of Great Britain as head of Associated States."

On the question of recognition of British Crown, the negotiations broke off, and the parties even dispersed. However, through the interference of mutual friends,

THE FINAL PHASE NEGOTIATIONS

and particularly through the soothing influence of Mr Griffiths, the treaty with the draft, as amended, was ultimately signed by Griffiths, Collins and Boston on the Irish side, and Lloyd George, Chamberlain, Birkenhead and Churchill on the British. In the treaty draft the Oath-formula ultimately accepted by the delegation is as follows —

"I do solemnly swear true faith and allegiance to the constitution of Irish Free State as by law established, and that I will be faithful to H M King George V, his heirs and successors by law in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain, and adherence to and membership of the group of nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations."

Thus, the treaty-draft makes Irish allegiance to the British Crown more specific and direct, whereas DeValera's draft recognised the King as a final head of all British Commonwealth of Nations

These two fundamental differences on the question of separation of Ulster and Oath of Allegiance subsequently led to serious split in the Dail, and ultimately led to the disastrous civil war in 1921-22

The other clauses of the draft referred to the establishment of constitution of Ireland on the lines of Dominions, particularly Canada, whereby Ireland accepted liability for Public Debts and War Pensions, agreed to keep a defence force proportionate to her population but to depend upon British Navy, till her own independent Navy is formed, to have free ports and harbours with special facilities to England in times of war, North Ireland to have separate parliament as per 1920 Act, but both North and South were not to pass any laws restricting religious freedom of either

BOOK I

These original terms have since been altered from time to time by mutual agreement, the last such material alteration being in connection with the share of Irish liabilities towards Public Debts of United Kingdom. By an agreement dated 3rd December 1929, under Cosgrave Government, Ireland was completely exonerated from all such liabilities, and in return Ireland gave up her supposed claim for some compensations. Thus there is a recent instance of revision of liabilities in respect of Public Debts. Still when the Indian National Congress has only put forward a modest demand for an impartial inquiry by a tribunal into such liabilities of total Public Debts of India, and although we have made out a strong case supported by facts, figures and statistics for revision and re-adjustment, there is a hue and cry raised, particularly in financial and commercial Tory circles of Great Britain, and the Indian claim and demand is characterised as breach of faith, dishonest attempt to evade legitimate dues and adversely affecting Indian credit with the world, &c. At the same time and in the same breath, the British Parliament offers such a tribunal to Ireland for investigation into the claim as regards payments of Irish annuities, and curiously enough, it is Free State that rejects such an offer. Thus at every stage and in every detail, we are made to feel the gail of discrimination thoroughly exposing the hollowness of British declaration of empty platitudes, about equality of treatment, justice and fairplay. Considering the tremendous sacrifices, untold sufferings and almost complete paralysis of government, as a result of persistent and ruthless agitation, that was created in Ireland, the draft peace terms, as settled and provisionally agreed to by Irish delegation, appear to be unsatisfactory. It must again be

THE FINAL PHASE NEGOTIATIONS

noted that these terms were subject to final ratification by the Irish National Assembly, the Dail. If that supreme body rejected them, the position would revert to *status quo* and hostilities on both sides would be renewed with perhaps redoubled vigour. Though it was expected that Griffiths would be conciliatory and yielding in his attitude, the extremists and Republican youths had pinned their faith on their most intrepid, courageous and uncompromising leader, Michael Collins, whose persistency, devotion and iron-will, and above all power of organisation and dare-devil adventures, were the principal factors that led to these triumphant results. Hence the extremist section was rather amazed and surprised at his conciliatory attitude, as they expected him to stick to the original goal, at least so far as the questions of Union and Complete Independence were concerned.

Here we enter into a tragic and dark phase in the Irish struggle. An unfortunate and serious split occurred in the Party which was hitherto united, well-organised and compact, and it was divided into two bitter and hostile factions,—the “pro-draft” and the “anti-draft” parties. For months and months, most acrimonious controversies raged in the National Assembly, the extremist left-wingers being led by the President DeValera, Cathal Brugha and other hot-heads and the “pro-treaty” party under Griffiths, Vice-President, Collins, who stood by the draft he had signed in London, Duggan, Cosgrave and others.

On 14th June 1922, shortly after the return of the delegation, under the clause of the draft treaty, the Dublin authorities vacated the Castle and handed over

BOOK I

charge of the entire administration to the Provisional Government, with Michael Collins at its head and Duggan and Cosgrave as members. Collins, who only a few months ago, could not come within two or three miles of the Dublin Castle for fear of being shot at sight, as the most dangerous leader, was now installed in the Palace of the Viceroy. He was transformed from the rebel-chief to the most autocratic head of Government, wielding greater power than enjoyed by any Lord-Lieutenant before or Governor-General since. The tragedy grows and becomes more pathetic when the erstwhile victim of repression, became the most ruthless victimiser, out-Frenching French in the rigorous measures that he adopted in his new position of responsibility, to suppress the rising and the still raging flame of republicanism, that he himself had kindled only three years ago. Having successfully evaded for years the death-blow from the enemy, he ultimately fell a victim to a fatal cruel blow from his own close associates and comrades. Such are the vicissitudes of public political life, where it is truly said, "Everything is fleeting and nothing is permanent, comrades-in-arms today may be the deadliest foes tomorrow." The pet of the people and the idol of Republican youths, was now openly dubbed by his late worshippers as "traitor" to the country and guilty of high treason and treachery with the party, all because he deemed, in the best interests of his country, to cry "halt" and to take a discrete and wise advantage of the psychological moment, instead of being carried away by mere passion and impulsive sentiment to a point, which would have led to sure destruction and disaster. None in Ireland knew the real inner situation better. None

THE FINAL PHASE NEGOTIATIONS

had so correctly gauged the national resources, strength and the reserved energy, and hence none was in a better position to judge "when to stop", where to "halt" when wise statesmanship may mean sure redemption and a rash step "forward" may mean fatal and certain disaster. Although denounced then by hasty hot-heads, to-day after a lapse of 10 years, when judging the situation from this distance in a calmer atmosphere, free from momentary impulse and heat of the moment, his worst critics recognise and acknowledge, that just as Michael Collins' adventures and courage had pulled them through the worst ordeals ever experienced by a struggling nation, so his timely discretion and far-seeing wisdom, had also saved the situation at a most critical juncture, when a wrong attitude on his part might have deprived his country and people of enjoyment of the fruits of their labour, sacrifices and sufferings. In short, it was his courage in facing the popular fury in peace, as his courage in facing the enemy in war, that really saved the country. The funds were exhausted, the Volunteer-recruitment was falling off, people were naturally getting war weary, tired and fagged out as a result of nearly three years' most brutal sufferings and hardships, and although he had kept a bold front till the last and kept their national secrets, both from the authorities as well as from his own followers, and being guided by only one consideration, the best interests of his country and people, he was prepared to sacrifice perhaps what was to him dearer than his life, personal popularity and popular favour, and risking all to save the country, he took the bold decision, and be it said to his credit, stuck to it to the last, though deserted by his colleagues and obstructed and hemmed in by his

CHAPTER X

Final Phase—"Treaty and After"

Here we must seriously study the course of Irish events since the civil war, and the unfortunate party split, because they are closely associated with the present-day Indian political problems and afford one of the most instructive and valuable lessons to Indian Nationalists, furnishing a helpful guide for future course of action

We have seen before that the peace terms, though finally adopted and accepted by a large majority of Irish Nationalists and even passed through the only test of a general election, were not such as would satisfy even moderate minds like Griffiths. An extremist hot-head like Michael Collins, who has been rightly described as Jawahir of Ireland, accepted the treaty as a matter of political expediency, under the circumstances, to serve as a halting place, or a stepping stone for further advance towards the goal, the interval being used only as a breathing space to consolidate the national energy and strength.

So apparently both parties, DeValera and Collins groups, were agreed and had the same opinion on the merits of the treaty-terms. Both had the same object in view, viz to reach the ultimate goal by the quickest route possible. Whilst Collins' party believed that transfer of substantial internal political power to the people and driving away the foreign element from the internal administration, was a great step forward, towards the goal and good use could be made of this new power to expedite the future journey, DeValera and his party, on the other hand, perhaps at first, believed that the national

FINAL PHASE—TREATY AND AFTER

destination could be reached quicker by a circuitous route, outside the new legislature, particularly guided in this course by the sentimental objection of taking an "Oath of Allegiance" to the British Crown, to which at heart he felt so bitterly estranged

Modern Irish political events have conclusively vindicated the attitude of Michael Collins and his party, and it has been proved that of the two, he was more far-sighted and deep, had gauged the situation more correctly and was a greater political prophet, so far as future predictions were concerned. DeValera and his party, to their costs, discovered that national fight against foreign force and outside intruders is quite different from a mere struggle or contest against an opposing political party of the same nation and country, that they cannot expect the same universal support and general mass sympathy from the people and country as a whole, that responded to their call to drive away the foreign bureaucracy, that Collins was right when he apprehended that national exhaustion had set in and breathing time for recuperation and re-consolidation was necessary. The civil war started by the extreme wing against the pro-treaty party and against the provisional government as the first "Irish Free State Government" was only a passing phase, a momentary wave of huff and indignation, confined to a few irreconcilables, lacking both in permanency and strength. The Irish repressive measures adopted by the Irish National Government, did not create the same effect and produce the same reaction and impetus as repression and tyranny from foreign autocrats. The civil war soon faded away. The majority of the people soon settled down to new conditions, feeling happier, more contented,

BOOK I

peaceful and prosperous The dead hero, Michael Collins, who was on the spur of the moment denounced as a traitor, was again restored to his original high pedestal, and was once more acclaimed as both wise and courageous, saviour of the country, gifted with rare virtues, having both the indomitable courage and iron-will to fight, and equally possessing wisdom and statesmanship to yield, being guided in either course by the only consideration of highest interests of the country, quite regardless of personal position or popular favour or resentment DeValera and his party, on the other hand, after boycotting the legislature and not getting the expected national response for his constructive revolutionary programme outside, gradually sunk into the background, and he in good time discovered that the national mind and will were more and more concentrating on the new national assembly, and people were gradually drawn more and more towards elections, with the result that greater and better minds like himself and some of his party members, were by degrees becoming politically extinct, whereas moderate back-benchers of the type of Cosgrave and friends, who were little heard of in the great struggle, had come in the forefront, even throwing into shade greater national giants outside the Dail

After the suppression of the civil war, not having any militant fighting programme, some of his militant followers left the country, settling down either in America or other parts of the Empire. Thus his ranks were getting thinner and thinner every day DeValera very soon realised that by boycotting the new legislature he had committed political blunder of the greatest magnitude

FINAL PHASE—TREATY AND AFTER

that was leading to the gradual extinction of his party as a political factor in the country, and if continued, would soon end his own and his party's political career. For years after the treaty, when DeValera and his party had kept away from the new Free State, the world outside, heard nothing about them. DeValera was a name almost forgotten in the world as well as in Irish politics and public life.

Having realised his mistake, and being convinced of the wrong step taken by him, he it said to his credit, that he displayed great courage in publicly acknowledging his error and openly retracing the false steps. He felt that the only way to save himself and the party, as well as the more effective method of gaining his object, was to capture the national assembly and assume reigns of government. So after having kept out for more than five years, ultimately in 1927 he decided to contest the elections, even by submitting to the humiliating inconsistency of taking the "Oath of Allegiance". Few years of isolation had so adversely affected his position that this erstwhile president of the Irish Dail, the acknowledged head of the "Parallel Government", who swept the polls during the War, had lost so much influence, that he found it difficult to maintain his grounds against an opponent, who was not even considered important enough to hold a ministerial post under him in the National Government, and even today, after retrieving his position a good deal, DeValera, as the head of the Free State, cannot boast of a decided majority but must rely upon the slippery support of one or the other party to endorse his policy.

But within a few years of the assumption of office, Irish politics are again in the forefront, and the eyes of

BOOK I

the whole civilised world are once more turned to that little pigmy island, that impertinent little naughty "pup" which has again begun to prick John Bull's mighty empire DeValera, the almost forgotten national hero, the leader of an almost effaced political party, has once more become an important international figure, and the old "Oath" "Indemnity" and Union questions that British statesmen thought had passed into the limbs of political history out of the pale of modern politics, are again taxing the best brains in the empire, and to crown all, the rebel chief after achieving his object at home is invited to preside over the Council of League of Nations, thus bossing over the swell-headed and impudent bosses of the Mother-country

All this quick and magical change is a result of a wise and timely change in the policy There is no doubt that, if instead of frankly acknowledging the error, influenced by false sense of prestige or obstinately submitting to a false sense of national sentiment DeValera had pursued the erroneous course of boycotting the legislature for one or two elections more, he and his party would have suffered the same disastrous fate as "Wafdists" or "Zaghlulists," in Egypt.

Since then, he has astounded the world by performing wonderful parliamentary fetes, leading to a systematic and gradual recession from the British Empire, making use of the very instrument created by the British for further cementing the bond and strengthening their hold, he has furnished a most remarkable instance in modern history, of an effective struggle for independence through apparently Constitutional and Parliamentary methods and has proved that under certain

FINAL PHASE—TREATY AND AFTER

circumstances, even this Institution has great potentiality and capacity for achieving one's Goal. The Governor-General, the sole representative of the Crown, is removed for good, not by the terrorist method, but by the gentler and more effective method of Parliament, the former would only have removed a particular individual, but retained the office to be filled in by his successor of their choice, whereas the latter has put an end permanently to that system of appointment. DeValera has also fulfilled the boastful prophecy, he had uttered whilst taking the hateful oath, that he was only taking the oath with a view to end it, the long pending indemnity Question has also automatically solved itself.

And from the British point of view, the tragic irony of all this is, that the Consent of the Crown is obtained to all those acts, leading to the gradual but certain recession from the British Empire.

Those who permanently adhere to the programme of Council-Boycott, as a matter of principle and not merely as a political method should note the recent programme of DeValera and his party. This Irish political lesson is more instructive than either Russian, Turkish or even Egyptian, because the struggle, as in India is direct with the British Parliament and Cabinet. None can suggest that these great revolutionary leaders like Lenin, Kemal, Zaghlul and DeValera, who all made use of Parliaments as important additional revolutionary weapon, were less radical or extreme than the Council-Boycotters in India.

CHAPTER XI.

Tactical Leadership and Political Strategy.

A critical and close study of biographies and histories, both of greatest revolutionaries and revolution, either in the East or West, whether modern or ancient, reveals one quality in a remarkable degree viz that the greatest and the most successful military commanders, have also proved on occasions to be the most yielding and reasonable peace-negotiators, at times offering what would appear to normal minds, the most humiliating and surrendering terms to the opponents. Such generosity arises, not from weakness or want of courage, but is the natural result of strength and self-confidence, that is, too great and magnanimous to be hampered by such false sense of prestige or loss of popular favour.

Napoleon Bonaparte is recognised today as one of the greatest military commanders the world has produced, and undoubtedly he was the greatest military figure in European history for the last several centuries. His egoism and swell-headedness was notorious, and has become proverbial. None has been guilty of such arrogant and pompous declaration as "Napoleon means state, Napoleon means almost whole of Europe", the most autocratic dictator ever born in that autocratic Western world. Still, throughout his military career, one is surprised to find that almost invariably before a great battle, after all his preparations were complete and fully confident of great success, an offer of an olive branch to the haughty foe would be made, couched in most humble and humiliating terms, as if a weakling were begging for peace from a powerful and ruthless foe to avoid disaster and ruin. These messages of peace, good-will

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

and harmony that he addressed at times a few hours before the most bloody and decisive battles to the haughty commanders of the opposite camp, make most interesting reading, appeals in the name of the suffering humanity, as if the words came from a Christian religious prelate and not from a human-giant, responsible for greater bloodshed and disaster in the world, than any other militarist. Could any student of history or politics, even remotely suggest, that these offers for peace and compromise, even on the eve of great battles, after all the preparations were complete and fully confident and aware of his superior strength and prowess, resulted from a weak or hesitating mentality or were lightly made regardless of the interests of his cause or country? Just as Terrence MacSwiney, the Irish Republican martyr in his exalted moments, gave utterance to what appears to be whole-hearted support to "Gandhi" doctrine by publicly declaring that 'in the long run it is those who endure greatest hardships and sufferings and not those who inflict, that will ultimately succeed' Napoleon is also credited with a similar expression that appears strange, coming from the greatest exponent of brute force. As the first Pro-Consul and civil administrator, for the time being stripped of his military garb and ideas, he declared to the wondering world in 1800 —

"What amazes me more than anything else is the impotence of force to organise anything. There are only two powers in the world, the spirit and the sword. In the long run the world will always be conquered by spirit."

Prophetic words, uttered by a military prophet of the West a century ago! Will the greatest gospel of

BOOK I

truth and non-violence, the symbol of Asiatic spirit, after a long lapse of 130 years, prove the truth and correctness of this prophecy and thus spread a new religion and doctrine in the materialist West by gaining a triumph for the spirit over the sword ?

Now let us turn to Mustaffa Kemal Pasha, the Napoleon of the East, though he himself felt offended by this compliment. Once some flatterers, with a view to tickle the Gazî, compared him with Napoleon, Alexander and Caesar, to which the young Turk quickly retorted, "If you want to honour me, call me only Mustaffa Kemal Pasha of Turkey, nothing more, nothing less. Any other appellation would be an insult." Still the description is correct and nearest to the mark. Like Napoleon he is considered to be the greatest military commander and statesman, at least in Modern Asia,—a man who has magically transformed in a short time the "Sick Old Man" of Europe, as Turkey was contemptuously called, to a living, kicking youth that none dare trifle with or insult.

Both Mustaffa Kemal Pasha's biography and modern Turkish history disclose that, before being driven to drastic steps of establishing a parallel government in Angora and declaring civil war against Stamboul authorities, he made repeated approaches and attempts for peace and compromise, offering to serve the Khalifa Vahedîna as a faithful minister, if he accepted his theory of the sovereignty of people and became a constitutional monarch and religious head. If the Khalifa had been free from the sinister influence and evil advice of his Western, particularly British "friends" and advisers, perhaps this offer of Kemal might have been

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

accepted and the final desperate measures leading to the abolition of the Khalifa and his deportation from the country might have been avoided, and it is worth while noting that this religious, political and social revolution—the greatest in the Islamic world, was effected not at the point of the bayonet but through the peaceful and normal agency of the “ballot-box” Every great change and evolution was brought about by first capturing the national assembly in Stamboul and getting resolutions passed in accordance with the terms of the constitution. Thus the boycott of Turkish Parliament and establishment of rival administration were only temporary measures to gain strength and consolidate his position, and also to save disaster and ruin for his party As soon as he felt sufficiently strong, he reverted to the original legislature, completely captured it, his newly formed Peoples’ Party sweeping the polls, and then followed through this new Parliament the series of reforms that completely transformed Modern Turkey

Though this is not the place to go into most interesting details of modern Turkish history, still one incident may be casually mentioned as particularly referring to what is known as Indian Khilafatist movement Even after the Khalifa was deprived of his temporal power, Kemal was prepared to maintain the institution as purely religious head out of regard for sentiment of the Islamic world. The Khalifa was given a liberal allowance and allowed to live in pomp and dignity in his original palace, the only restriction being on his political liberty However, in 1924, some time after the arrangement was arrived at and was working satisfactorily, Mahomedan agitation was started in India to restore the Khalifa to his original position, and not being content with agitation in this

BOOK I

a country, a petition signed by Aga Khan and Amir Ali, was sent to Turkey on behalf of Indian Mahomedans. This was considered a dangerous move, menacing the position of the newly established Turkish Republic, as it was apprehended by Kemal that it may develop into a political upheaval in the country to destroy the Republic and restore the original regime. Hence he was compelled to resort to more drastic measures for the safety and security of the new State, and took repressive steps against some Turkish papers that had espoused the cause taken up by Indian Muslims, and to avoid all trouble and risk for the future, he had to take the extreme step to remove the Khalifa altogether from the country. Thus well might the last Khalifa say to his Indian sympathisers, 'May God save me from my friends,' as this hasty move far from helping or improving his position, led to his ultimate and complete downfall. Thus it is clear that our communalist fanatic friends, the Maulanas and Moulvies, who can safely indulge in religious pranks here, would find no quarters in that real Islamic world, and instead of preaching mischievous anti-national sermons in mosques, the only hospitality they would enjoy there would be that of the Turkish prisons. However, that is drifting beyond our original prime object. For our present purpose, we are only concerned in that phase of Kemal's life, which goes to prove the same doctrines, that reputed and famous revolutionaries and fighters in the world are as great and daring in the fields of battle as shrewd tacticians, and statesmanlike in the councils of nations, and that in national machineries, greasing and soothing processes are as essential as irritating fuels.

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

China furnishes another modern example of Eastern revolution resulting in the overthrow of one of the most ancient and religious Asiatic imperialism. Beginning with an individual plot to assassinate a provincial Viceroy in Wuchang, the result of the execution of influential citizens as alleged would-be-assassins, led to a tremendous popular anti-imperialist upheaval, first in the whole Province. The conflagration gradually spread to several provinces in the South, so that within a few months the revolutionary movement was so wide-spread and well organised as to necessitate the establishment of a provisional Parallel National Government at Nanking on 1st January 1912, only three months after the first serious provincial outbreak. We need not detail here the multifarious causes that created such a sudden and universal political awakening in the Chinese, who were proverbially lethargic and indifferent to political or even civic sentiments. We are here concerned with only such phases of the struggle that are relevant to our present subject.

Though the initiative, as in all other cases, was taken by "direct action", still, as in Turkey, the final transfer was the result of a wise and statesmanlike compromise, which was brought about by a process of strangulation. This is one of the rare instances in history where the imperial throne submitted in good time to the inevitable fate and averted further disaster to the nation and self by wisely yielding to the popular will and agreeing to surrender its special privileges and powers to the popular assembly. This is perhaps the only solitary instance in the histories of revolutions of the world, where a republic is formally first established by an imperial edict from the Crown. The following extraordinary imperial edict was

BOOK I

issued over the signature of the Empress on behalf of the Boy-Emperor on 12th February 1912, in less than six weeks after the establishment of Provisional Government at Nanking —

"As a consequence of the uprising of the revolutionary army, to which the different provinces immediately responded, the Empire seethed like the boiling cauldron and the people were plunged in utter misery. Separated as the South and the North are by great distances, the unwillingness of either side to yield to the other can result only in the continued interruption of trade and the prolongation of hostilities, for so long as the form of Government is undecided the people can have no peace

"We, and His Majesty the Boy-Emperor, hereby decide in favour of a Republican form of constitutional government. Thus we would gratify on the one hand the desire of the whole Nation, which, tired of anarchy, is desirous of peace, and on the other hand would follow in the foot-steps of the ancient sages, who regarded the throne as the sacred trust of the Nation. During the period of transference of government from the old to the new, there should be some means of uniting South to the North thus assuring peace to the people and tranquility to Empire, forming one great Republic of China by the union of five great peoples, namely Manchus, Chinese, Mongols, Mohamedans and Tibetans together with their territory and integrity"

This is a remarkable and unique document, perhaps the only instance in history, where, true to the Eastern traditional notion of the crown "as a trust of the nation", there is a voluntary surrender and abdication of power, a kingly sacrifice to secure peace and unity amongst the

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

people and tranquility for the Empire. Perhaps the step was the result of political wisdom and expediency, in yielding with good grace in time, to avoid an ultimate unceremonious "ousting" with disgrace. Still how many Western potentates have displayed such grace and statesmanship by timely surrender?

The Republicans were not slow to respond to the gesture. The Chinese Crown, by this one wise step was saved from the certain disaster and calamities that befell Western Christian Imperial Houses. Instead of being beheaded like King Charles I and Richard II of England or guillotined like the Bourbon King Louis of France, and worse still, the ruthless butchery with which the whole family of Czar Nicholas of Russia was wiped out, the Chinese Republic treated the abdicated Emperor and the whole House with great consideration and respect. One of the first resolutions of the New Republic was to make a most generous annual allowance of 4,000,000 taels with permission to occupy the same Imperial Palace with all its pomp, grandeur and dignity, only stripped of its political and administrative powers. There is no danger to the safety and security of the Imperial House, so long as it refuses to play as a tool in the hands of foreign exploiters, particularly Japan, and resists the sinister attempts to make it an instrument to serve their selfish ends against the best interests of the Chinese Republic. The Turkish potentate might also have received the same sympathetic considerations had he exercised sufficient wisdom and foresight and refused to play into the hands of his Western Christian so-called friends.

Further, in response to the commendable appeal and with a view to secure the laudable object of attaining unity between the North and the South, Sun-Yat-Sen, the

BOOK I

leader and founder of the Chinese Republic, made a great sacrifice by voluntarily surrendering his unimpeachable claim to the first presidency of the Chinese Republic in favour of his rival, Yuan-shi-Kai, the prime Minister of the former State and the Maker of the new Chinese Army. Such was the desire expressed in the imperial edict, and the rebel chief, in a spirit of give and take, yielded to what must have been the greatest self-sacrifice, by voluntarily giving up the exalted place that had been the dream and ambition of his life.

Eighteen years after, a minor protege, though from a side branch of the same ancient Asiatic Imperial House, the King of Siam, in 1932, maintained the same Eastern notion about the Crown as a "sacred trust of the people". He very wisely and discreetly yielded to the popular will, even before the first blow was struck, and thus saved his House, country and people from needless misery and suffering, and certain disaster. Will our pigmy potentates, the Indian Rajahs, Maharajahs and Nawabs, timely awaken from their fairy dreams and learn some valuable and useful lessons from their Asiatic Imperial colleagues, or will they still continue in the Western delusion of paramountcy and foreign protectorate, till one fine morning they will be sadly awakened to the bitter realities and reminded of the religious Eastern regal doctrine that the "Crown is only a sacred trust of the people" and not a toy for personal sport and gratification, and that in these days of Republican Democracies, the old exploded theory and method of paramountcy and dynastic treaty rights, cannot be sufficient protection against the irresistible and advancing avalanche of popular awakening democracy and national sentiments? When such ancient traditional religious Imperial Houses of China, 5000 years old,

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

Russia, France and Turkey, with traditions thousands of years old, could be swept off in a few days in the rising tide, how do these mere nonentities and pigmies in comparison to these great giants, expect to be saved from the irrevocable fate that awaits them, perhaps not at a distant date? If they desire even to retain half the loaf, let them be wise like the Chinese Dowager Empress or Siamese King before they are wiped out with disgrace and disaster like the more arrogant and unwise autocrats of the other faith. When even the wild tribes of Afghan would not tolerate absolute autocracy and have secured a sort of constitutional monarchy with representative institution, how do they expect to preserve their old and the only surviving irresponsible bureaucratic relics of autocracy in this ancient land of democracies, with this new awakening of national consciousness? Do they not realise that the days of "one man's" rule have long past and to-day in the wide world, either in the East or in the West, there is not a single state where monarchy has not wisely perceived and clipped its wings, submitting to the popular demands, sacrificing the substance to retain even the ornamental shadow? Let us hope that they will soon awaken from the long sleep of "Rip Van Winkle" and cease to play the political buffoons and clowns, before they are completely wiped off the Indian stage.

We are afraid we have remained too long in the uncongenial atmosphere of bureaucrats. Let us return to the more healthy surrounding of youths, as our principle concern and business is with them, the future citizens and administrators of India.

There is one point in the Chinese political puzzle that may appeal to youths and adults alike in the country in their search for demonstrative illustrations from other

parts of the world to help their cause. In the absence of a more plausible and more honest argument, the enemies of Indian progress are often advancing a curious argument which could only be characterised as a dishonest subterfuge. "Compare Indian problem not with Ireland, Egypt or any other Dominion", they say, "India, on account of her vastness and greatness, with conflicting creeds and religions, with a home for so many communities with different cultures and traditions, cannot stand as a united nation, until all these creeds and communities are merged into one political unit, Self-Rule for India is an idle dream." Do they not often point out the low percentage of literacy and general backwardness of the population, for which they, more than any one else, are responsible, as the stumbling block to Indian political goal? In short, we hear the same arguments and pleas that were hurled against the establishment of the Chinese Republic 20 years ago. In point both of area and population, China beats India. In point of literacy and general progress, including social, political and industrial, with all her drawbacks, India easily beats China. With regard to conflicting claims and interests, the Chinese problem is much more intricate and appeared more difficult of solution, before the goal was actually achieved. For more than five thousand years, the people were accustomed to an absolute autocratic independent monarchy, without even a semblance or shadow of representative institutions, such as are inflicted in India for the last half a century. China had a monarchy which was based on surer and firmer foundation of religion, the regal dynasty being directly connected with divine solar and other constellations, with people proverbially lethargic and known as "opium-eaters." There was no country,

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

even in supposed backward Asia, that was considered to be so hopelessly and irretrievably sunk into abyss of illiteracy, superstition and lasciviousness, and to add further to the difficulties of the problem, similar to India, its vast population was not homogenous or united but was divided into water-tight separate compartments of different religious creeds and cultures, dominated by at least four different religions, the Confucians, the Christians, the Buddhists and the Mahomedans, with the Manchus, the Chinese, the Mongols, the Tartars, the Tibetans and a host of sub-sects, assailed and surrounded by vulturous imperialistic states on all sides, Japan and Russia on the North and North-East, with England, France, Germany and the U S A., and even smaller states, each claiming a slice from the spoil, a greater dumping and hunting ground for both Western and Eastern imperialism than India. Only one illustration will suffice to show its helpless condition. The Customs, the main source of revenue for any maritime country, was mortgaged to all the Imperial states for years to come as security for most unconscionable and fraudulent transactions and was entirely under the control of British authorities, the Customs Commissioner-ship and all high officers' posts, being compulsorily held by Britishers, with such foreign fiscal domination, that without the unanimous assent of at least eleven states, it was not possible for Chinese authorities to alter their tariff rates both on exports and imports. There were also foreign concessions and settlements entwined by railways on all sides under foreign control, free ports and harbours, commercial and industrial exploitation galore, and all the rich mines and ores are owned mostly by Japan, Britain or the U S A. All these powerful interests, out of selfish

motives, had combined to block the progress and obstruct the nationalists' path. Still be it said to the credit of these stalwarts, that in spite of these apparently insurmountable difficulties and insoluble problems, they achieved their goal within a remarkably short time and with comparatively small losses and sacrifices. Moreover, the new Republican Councils, Central and Provincial, more or less on federal lines, are composed of representatives of all creeds, communities and religions, returned through a joint electorate, without any such superfluous safeguards as separate electorates or even reserve seats. Eighteen provinces in China proper, representing an area of 1,896,495 sq. miles and population of over 330,000,000, send their mixed representatives under a territorial electorate, the number being fixed according to population or importance, with a slightly different system of administration for Mongolia, Tibet and Chinese Turkistan because of their great distance from the centre. Some of the provinces are bigger and more populous than the French Republic or German Empire, even the smallest being as large as Greece or Sweden. The different religions and communities, though in small minorities, have not only survived this political experiment, but have progressed and developed better than before, and their religion and culture are protected only by one or two clauses in the "Fundamental Rights" under the new constitution.

The very first clause of the first provisional Constitution of the Republic of China, passed at Nanking in January 1912, Art 5, provides

"Citizens of the Chinese Republic are all equal and there shall be no racial class or religious distinctions."

Art 6, Cl H — *"Citizens shall have the freedom of religion"*

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

No doubt, long after the establishment of the new regime, serious internal disorders continued, as was to be expected during the period of transition, but the point to be noted and differentiated is, that all these political and economic strifes between various parties were attempts to gain power. There were no inter-communal riots or upheavals, such as between Catholics and Protestants in the West or Hindus and Muslims in India. Most of these unfortunate risings are due to personal jealousies and political rivalries between provincial governors and military commanders, and as the Chinese Nationalists rightly suspect, their origin could be traced to the foreign exploiting agencies, who are not yet reconciled to the altered conditions and who naturally prefer an autocratic monarchical atmosphere as more congenial for their wild pursuits.

But the impetuous, impatient and sentimental youth, that is same everywhere no matter to what religion, creed or country he belongs is not satisfied and does not seem convinced, by so many and so various illustrations and demonstrative instances from both the hemispheres and so divergent nationalities. Michael Collins and DeValera may be the idols of Irish youth and may represent limited republican ideals, in proportion to the size and importance of the country. Napoleon was never credited with real democratic principles, but he was considered to be one of the greatest autocratic dictators in history. Sun-Yet-Sen was after all a transitory Asiatic figure. Kemal, great though in his adventures and marvellous in his achievements, still would not come up to the higher standard and ideal of cosmopolitan youth of the world. Today there is only one country and one worldly personality, that appeals most to the masses, particularly the tender

juvenile imagination all over the world That country is Russia and that personality is Lenin No survey of national struggles in the world would be complete without a brief reference to the greatest and most phenomenal political experiment, undoubtedly, the most remarkable organiser and mass-leader that history has ever produced Just as in social circles Paris is supposed to lead in introducing latest fashions in modern societies, so in modern politics, Russia and Leninism are the prevailing wave, more like a fashion than a creed, particularly in less substantial but more noisy and empty political dramas

After Gandhi-Irwin truce in 1930, when the A I C C had assembled in Bombay to consider the political situation in the country, a batch of these "Reds" appeared with their banner and usual slogans "Down with Truce and Gandhi", "Fight to the finish", "Down with Traitors", "We want Complete Independence and no Compromises", etc, and similar denunciations were heard from the same quarters in press and on public platform, some having the impudence to denounce Mahatma Gandhi in a public meeting in labour area. Brave lads, deserving of all the plaudits, if only they had the courage of their convictions to carry their slogans to the logical conclusion Unfortunately for them, a few days after, a small incident occurred that thoroughly exposed their hollowness and insincerity, and these pompous noisy political bravadoes, turned out to be moral cowards, beating a disgraceful retreat in the face of a petty danger. Shortly after, a public notification appeared announcing the conference of "Naujuwan Bharat Sabha", the organisers being mostly these "Red" propagandists. The session was to be held in Bombay on the date and

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

place fixed, for which preparations were being made on a grand scale, and an influential leader from U P, was expected to preside. However, a few days before, a small but unexpected bombshell came in the shape of an order from the Commissioner of Police, banning the said conference under the Police Act. It was only a cracker bomb, a flea-bite, that any self-respecting body with a grain of moral courage, would have ignored. The maximum penalty for breach or violation of the order was one month's imprisonment, and although several friends assured these "Red" heroes, that even that insignificant danger was very distant, as the order could be successfully challenged in a court of law, still the idea of holding the conference in Bombay was given up. Apart from the reputation of the "Reds", an important public, civic and political right was at stake, as submission to such an order would establish a dangerous precedent in public life and give power to the head of the Police to restrict freedom of speech and association, even in normal times by means of an executive fiat. It was pointed out to the organisers that the section of the Police Act was abused, and that it was intended to apply only to cases where there was a risk of public disorder and violence in a meeting and not to suppression of political opinion. All these arguments, though most convincing, would not satisfy our "Red" heroes on one point, which seemed to be their only concern. Personal safety first was their creed, even at the cost of public disaster and grave danger to public cause. The same "drummers" who were loudest in their declamation against the Congress for "Compromise" and "Surrender", were the first to retreat, and after due discussion, the Executive Committee discreetly decided to postpone the Conference.

"*sine die*", and uptil to-day the adjourned Conference has not been held

What could be the value of denunciation and condemnatory criticism of such spurious and bogus followers of that great leader Lenin? None has condemned such hypocrisy and insincerity in stronger words than Lenin himself. Let us re-produce them for the benefit of our "Red" friends. Lenin described these dramatic slogan-shouters as modern "humbugs" and mere "bubble-prickers". He openly declared the slogan-shouting as one of the ways by which they humbug people. "The vital matter is that we should test the sincerity of those who utter slogans. We should compare their deeds with their words and that we should not be content with idealist and cheap jack phraseology, but should find out how much real work lies behind these empty words." We know our "Red" friends will grow redder on hearing this genuine "Red" testimonial from the "Reddest" of the "Red" Leader. How many of these empty and noisy drums will submit to these tests and come out unscathed, so as to escape Lenin's detestable but accurate description of "public humbugs" and mere "bubble-prickers".

"Little learning is a dangerous thing". Never was that precept more correctly applied than to superficial and incomplete study of Leninism or pamphlet studies of Russian Revolution. No doubt that "little learning" is responsible for the false public impression under which most of our youths labour, that Lenin was the most irreconcilable, most uncompromising, tactless, and ruthless fighter in whose political dictionary, such words as "Peace", "Compromise", "Surrender" never appeared.

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

"Fight to the finish", "Victory or Death", "No half-way House" &c, are some of the slogans usually attributed to him and described as "Leninite" slogans. That was the impression also left in my mind when my study on the subject did not go beyond superficial perusal of few pamphlets or newspaper articles, whereas a deeper and more careful study of the subject discloses an entirely different and unexpected picture. A critical review of his biographies as well as of the authentic history of the period, makes Lenin appear to possess rare qualities of a mass-leader, and the real secret of his phenomenal success is due, more to his thorough understanding of mass psychology, and the adjustment of his programme with a view to fit in with the prevailing wave of human elements, striking hard and ruthless, unyielding blows at psychological moments, but at the same time, knowing where and when to stop and retrace, and in his own words, adopt a zig-zag course. We can describe his attitude in his own words. Lenin once said, "It would be height of folly to renounce agreements, compromises and reforms, even though they be of an unstable and temporary nature, we might as well, while climbing a dangerous, high mountain, refuse, in advance, to make the ascent zig-zag or even to turn back for a while or give up the chosen course and direction, in order to test another, which may be easier to negotiate." To this, Stalin, his most devoted and faithful follower and student, adds a commentary —

"What we are concerned with are not reforms, compromises, agreements qua reforms, compromises and agreements but with the use they can be put to and the advantage to be gained. Like the reformist, they are not the first and the last word with us they can be used to

BOOK I

educate and prepare the masses to strengthen and consolidate the position. We may under certain circumstances have to enter the path of gradual transformation. In the words of our great leader Lenin, they are necessary and legitimate breathing spaces in passing from one phase of development to another."

Both these great leaders have consistently maintained throughout their blazing and glorious careers, the above policy and expediency, when dealing either with internal revolution or external foreign enemies. As Stalin again recently declared

"There are some who imagine that Leninism is against all reforms, compromises and agreements of any kind with the enemy. This is utterly wrong-headed. The Bolsheviks know as well as anyone else, Lenin's words, that the smallest contribution will be most thankfully received. They know that in certain circumstances both reforms in general and agreements and compromises in particular are both useful and necessary."

Equally mistaken seems to be the view about the Russian Revolution as a sudden and unexpected conflagration that swept the country, and in a furious fortnight's onslaught, transformed the whole face of the country, giving it a new political social and economic life. Though the final blow was quick and short, working like a heavenly miracle, this pitch and development had been reached, as a result of gradual stages of transformation, following the same serial order that is usually observed in all mass evolutions. Even if we omit to take notice of underground and invisible symptoms that were slowly growing for years, under the tyrannical Czardom, still the first outburst was in 1905, when the long

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

suppressed teaming masses, at last awakened from their long slumbers, gave the first visible sign of approaching storm. Though the rebellion was easily suppressed and resulted in terrible casualties for the poor unarmed workers, still it served as the starting point for the first phase and stage of the great struggle, the stage for preparation and consolidation. For the long interval of fifteen years, till 1917, one did not hear of any serious open trouble. To all outward appearances the position was completely restored, and the workers could not go beyond the usual mild weapon of strikes, protests or demonstrations, when their representatives, the newly formed Bolshevik and Communist party, in a hopeless minority, hammered their heads against the dead-wall of the Duma, a spurious legislature, even more impotent and bogus than our councils and assemblies. Nevertheless, consistent with their policy, they would not desert their posts, but they continued to clamour and clamour, both in and out of Duma, though in wilderness, at the same time conducting constructive propaganda outside. That is literally carrying out the policy of "accepting with thanks" whatever small contribution is made, with renewed efforts for more.

On this important question of working of the Duma with all its defects and drawbacks, and in spite of all its bogus character, Stalin, reviewing his past experiences, makes important references to what he describes as tactical leadership. He says

"Tactical leadership is a part of strategical leadership; satisfactory utilisation of all the forms of struggle and organisation are necessary"

"We must bring to the front these forms of struggle and organization which are best suited to the condition of

BOOK I

the movement at the time, to its ebb or its flow, as the case may be, those which are best fitted to mobilise the masses

" It does not suffice that the vanguard should realise the impossibility of maintaining the old order and the need for its overthrow. The masses also, the million-fold masses, must come to understand this need and must show themselves ready and willing to rally to the support of the vanguard. But such a thoughtful insight can only be acquired by the masses in the school of personal experience, and with that object we should put forward and make use of all methods of struggle and forms of organisations (including Duma and legislatures), which shall permit the masses to learn from experience the truth and correctness of our revolutionary watchwords "

The following words are more pertinent and important

" The vanguard would have become severed from the working class, and the latter would have lost touch with the masses, had not the Bolsheviks decided to take part in the Duma, to carry on the agitation within its wall, to concentrate their forces on parliamentary action, in order to show the masses the utter futility of the Duma, the falseness of the Cadets' (Constitutionalists and Liberals) promises, the impossibility of a compromise with Tsardom, and the need for an alliance between the peasantry and the working classes. Had the masses lacked this experience during the period, when the Duma functioned, it would have been impossible to unmask the Cadets and to secure the leadership in the hands of the Proletariat. The tactics of the Otzovists (Council-boycotters or abstentionists) who demanded the withdrawal of the social democratic fraction from the Duma, thereby repudiating

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

parliamentary action, gave rise to the danger of detaching the vanguard from its countless reserves

"Again the vanguard would have alienated itself from the Working Class and the latter would have forfeited its influence on the peasants and the soldiers, if the party had followed the lead of the Left-Wing Communists (Council-boycotters) who advocated a rising in April 1917 before the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries had discredited themselves in the eyes of the workers, by showing themselves to be partisans of the War and of Imperialism, before the masses had learnt to their sorrow, how lying were the utterances of Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries alike concerning peace, land and liberty. Had the masses been deprived of this experience of the Kerensky regime, the Mensheviks would not have become isolated from the masses, and the establishment of the Proletariat Dictatorship would have become impossible. The only correct tactics under the circumstances was to lay bare the errors of the petty bourgeois party and to carry on an open struggle within the Soviets (Councils)

"The tactics of the Left-Wing (boycotters) would have resulted in a mere handful of futile conspirators having no foothold in reality

And further to support this emphatic view, Stalin again quotes his great leader Lenin —

"A vanguard alone will not lead to victory. To hurl the vanguard into the fray before the masses are ready to support it or at least are willing to remain neutral, would not only be the height of folly but also a crime. Agitation and propaganda do not suffice to bring the masses to a suitable frame of mind. They need also to be schooled by political experience (Council or Duma). This is the law

BOOK I

which lies at the root of all far-reaching revolutions, a law which has been confirmed in a striking manner both in Russia and Germany. The Russian masses often illustrate, and the German masses, whose education and culture are comparatively at a higher level, had each in turn to learn by bitter experience (through bogus legislatures) all the powerlessness, the listlessness, the helplessness, the servility of the governments, carried on by the leaders of the Second International (Constitutionalists and Moderates),—henchmen of the Bourgeoisie. The masses had to learn by experience that either of the two Dictatorships was inevitable” (“Work” Russian Edition)

Now let us pause and seriously ponder over these most weighty words, more valuable to us at this present juncture than to anybody else, from admittedly two of the greatest mass-organisers and successful revolutionary leaders of the modern world. The words are not merely of historical or academical interest. The references are to experiences almost contemporary with our period of acute political struggle, under circumstances too almost similar and parallel to ours, at a time when the Indian political mind will be most agitating on the same vital and critical issue, ‘to enter or not to enter the new legislatures’ We must at once confess that with all the drawbacks and defects,—the reservations, safeguards, vetoes, and even separate electorates—the new Indian legislatures will be a shade better, more representative and less impotent than the Russian Duma of 1905 under the Czar, who was considered the greatest autocrat in the world.

• The Vanguard referred to are the Communists or Bolšheviks that formed a hopeless minority, both in the

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

Duma as well as outside, the percentage of their membership never rising above 5 or 7 to the population outside or the total strength of the Duma. In that helpless condition, they were more impotent and powerless, so far as influencing the general policy or government administration are concerned than the Swaraj or Congress Party has been in the past or will be in future. Still, even under such depressing and helpless condition, the most experienced leaders after due considerations and deliberations and for most weighty reasons, decided to carry on the agitation within the walls, to concentrate their forces on parliamentary action and take part in the Duma proceedings. None dare suggest, either in Russia or outside, that leaders of the stamina and calibre of Lenin and Stalin and the whole group of stalwarts who suggested that policy, were actuated by any sinister motives or sought self-interest or self-advancement by advocating this policy. According to these definitely expressed views, even though these bogus councils cannot be utilised for the original and primary purpose of controlling public policy and enforcing it on administration in accordance with the popular will, nevertheless that avenue should be exploited as an important item and weapon in the national struggle.

In India the additional danger and new menace is the approaching canker of communalism.

Such are some of the important arguments that made them decide on Duma-entry and reject the tactics of Otzovists (Council-boycotters). The vanguard referred to is, as stated above, the most advanced political party, the Communists and the Bolsheviks, who correspond to the Republicans and Sinn-Fainers in Ireland, the Kemalists in Turkey, the Wafdists or Zaghlulists in Egypt, the

BOOK I

Kao-ming-tang in China and the Indian National Congress in India

From the brief survey of the recent political struggles of the Vanguards in different countries we have seen that the tactical and strategical leadership, the policy as emphatically referred to in the above important extracts from recent writings of two greatest mass-leaders, was followed in the main, with such variations as are best suited to the peculiar conditions and circumstances then existing in the countries at the time, the most remarkable and the most recent instance being of Ireland, where a terrible split occurred in the Republican party mainly on this vital issue, leading even to disastrous civil war, but in the end, after experiencing that in the words of Stalin and Lenin, "the detachment and isolation from the masses" resulting from the policy of boycott of legislatures" is suicidal and leads to the gradual extinction of the party, DeValera recognised his error and retraced his step in good time, thus tacitly vindicating the attitude of his erstwhile colleague and comrade Michael Collins. In the words of the Russian leader again, DeValera, through the national assembly and as President of the Free State, is in a much better and stronger position "to expose the tactics of the Cadets, the henchmen" (in this case the Cosgravites), and by a bold forward policy "to gradually isolate the Kerenskys and Mensheviks (of Ireland) from the general masses"

A further study of developments of the Russian struggle shows that the vanguard in the Communist party, under the distinguished leadership, consistently maintained this policy with regard to Duma or Government administrative and legislative machinery, at various stages throughout the struggle, till the final goal was

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

reached Even after futile rising in 1905, when most of the party members in the Duma were either executed or imprisoned, their places were taken up by others, and for 15 years, this small but gallant band battered their heads against dead and deaf walls of the "Kremlin" till the time was considered ripe for striking the second blow, leading to one stage further in the progressive advance. The February Revolution of 1917 resulted in the overthrow of Tsardom, but the transference of political power came not by one jump to the Proletariat but through the intermediate stage of what is known as "Feudal Democracy",—a provisional government of Kerenskys and Mensheviks with a political mentality on Western democratic parliamentary lines. All natural political evolutions pass through these progressive stages,—absolute monarchy replaced by constitutional feudalism, which in its turn is overthrown by republic or proletariat regime, which is the final and last stage of political growth. There were many impatient left-wingers who thought it a great blunder not to have overthrown both Tsardom and Feudalism in one blow, in the February Revolution of 1917 and effected complete transfer of political power to Proletariat. According to their view that would have saved the further and the most intensive struggle of October 1917, the final stage of the Revolution.

Again it was tactical and strategic leader and master-mind, Lenin, that managed to split the fight in two stages so as first to deal with the greatest menace and enemy, the Tsardom, even joining hands for that purpose with their lesser political opponents, the Capitalists, vested interests and feudal bureaucracy, and installing them at the head of provisional government during the transitory period. The shrewd wisdom of this step that appeared

BOOK I

strange and inexplicable at the time, is made apparent today in the words of Stalin :—

"It was necessary by transferring the provisional government to them, even for a short time, to give them an opportunity to behave in such a manner that by their own misdeeds and breaches of promises, they would stand discredited before the general masses, and thus help to make the combination and organisation against their overthrow, more effective than any mass propaganda"

Stalin further says —

"Had the masses been deprived of the experience of Kerensky regime, the Mensheviks would not have become isolated from the masses, and the establishment of Proletariat Dictatorship would have been impossible. The only correct tactics under the circumstances was to lay bare the errors of the petty bourgeois parties"

With that objective, for this short period of few months, the Bolshevik Executive Committee gave the Provisional Government all assistance and co-operation; without such co-operation, it would not have survived for a day, though they were adopting an anti-Communist policy of participating in Imperialists' war and preserving vested capitalist interests in the country

As months passed by, the cleavage between the two with such fundamentally different mentalities and policies, became more and more difficult, and the final rupture between the Capitalists, Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat seemed inevitable. Even then tactical leadership carried Lenin to such a length as to make a most reasonable offer for peace and compromise, so late as September 1917, a few weeks before the final October Revolution. On 3rd September, under the heading

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

"Compromise", Lenin made the following offer to his opponents through the public press —

"We are now faced with such a sudden, such a surprising upheaval of the Revolution, that we are in a position as a party to propose a voluntary compromise to our adversaries, to the petty bourgeois Democratic Parties in office, to the Mensheviks. It is only by way of exception, it is only in virtue of a special situation which apparently will last for a short time, that we can propose a compromise to their parties, and we ought, it seems to me, to do so. What is a compromise to us is a return to the demand we made before July, formation of a government of Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks but responsible to the Soviet, without claiming a part in the Government. The Bolsheviks would renounce their demand for immediate transfer of power to the workers and the poor peasants. On the other hand, the compromise would involve two obvious conditions which require nothing of the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, viz., absolute liberty of agitation and the calling of the Constituent Assembly at the date fixed, or even within a shorter period."

Let the "Slogan-shouters" and "bubble-prickers" of Bombay, who in the name of their supposed leader Lenin, denounced Gandhiji for entering into Gandhiji-Irwin truce, and created disgraceful public scenes at the A. I. C. C. and other public functions, seriously ponder over this precious document emanating from the fountain-source of Bolshevism and Communism. After having struggled for years and made tremendous sacrifices for the transference of complete political power to the Proletariat, when success is almost knocking at the doors, this supposed

BOOK I

irreconcilable and uncompromising leader and reputed mass-organiser, offers terms of peace to the inveterate enemies of his party, the Mensheviks, surrendering the whole administration to them if they would in return concede most elementary and reasonable popular demands viz. liberty of agitation and calling of Constituent Assembly at an early date. It reminds us of the attitude adopted by our Liberal and Moderate friends in Bombay in 1919-20, when the Secretary of State, Mr. Montague, during his visit to India offered to transfer substantial self-rule to Bombay Presidency as in his opinion, as a result of his personal investigations and observations he felt that Bombay Presidency was best prepared for the experiment, but our timid Liberal friends, who formed the political deputation on behalf of Western India, pleaded with the "donor" to withhold the 'gift' still for some years to come as they did not feel confident enough to assume the responsibility and reins of government, and would be more content and pleased if some more liberty was given to them to carry on the constitutional agitation which alone seemed to be their ultimate political goal.

Fortunately for Russia, that swell-headed and arrogant Menshevik leader, Kerensky, with his characteristic bourgeois mentality, spurned this offer with contempt and thus paved the way for Russia, that was chalked out for her by Destiny. Nevertheless Lenin's offer for compromise stands as one of the most remarkable instance in history of tactical and strategic leadership, having a deep design and plan, which may not be apparent on the surface to normal uniformed mentalities of average intelligence. This timely offer and its rejection further strengthened the cause of the Communists and

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

discredited the Menshevik regime, thus contributing to the final and complete success a few weeks after

Some time after, when the position of the Provisional Government in Russia became absolutely untenable, the same swell-headed leader, Kerensky who in his arrogance had spurned the offer of peace, in his turn came knocking at Lenin's door offering more humble and compromising terms. But Lenin knew the psychological moments, both for compromise as well as for 'fight to finish'. It was his turn this time to reject this belated offer of his unstatesmanlike opponent, and completed the work of destruction of Provisional Government by effectively wiping out Menshevik regime and realised his long cherished dream and ideal, viz, "All Power to Proletariat". There is one more episode in the romantic and adventurous career of Lenin that deserves mention here, as further illustrating great diplomacy, tact and level-headedness of this master-mind at a time of supreme national crisis

Even after completely overthrowing the internal enemies, the newly established Proletariat State had to be tactfully steered clear and saved from foreign menace and external attack. "Down with the imperialist war" was amongst the most important slogans of "Red" revolutionaries, one of the solemn pledges to the people being to end this long drawn-out struggle as soon as power was transferred to the Proletariat. Continuance of the war was one of the bitterest charges against the Provisional Government. Hence, consistent with this policy and in order to redeem the repeated pledges to the nation, the new Government at once proceeded to sever all connection with the Allies, so far as the future

conduct of war concerned, declared truce and called upon the Allies also to cease hostilities and join in the peace move Trotsky, the Foreign Commissar, was first entrusted with this task, and out of his long negotiations with the Allies on the subject, one communication, addressed to British Imperialists, deserves special mention as particularly referring to us and other subject races Addressing to the British diplomats, he wrote —

“ Are they (British Imperialists) in turn also ready to concede the right of self-determination to the people of Ireland, Egypt, India, Madagaskar, Indo-China, &c as the Russian Revolution has conceded the right of self-determination to the people of Finland, Ukraine, White Russia, etc? For it is clear that to demand the right of self-determination for nations inside the frontier of the enemy and to refuse the right of self-determination for nations in one's own State and Colonies would be naked cynical hypocritical Imperialism ”

Naturally, the British diplomats, in spite of all their ingenuity and resourcefulness, find no effective reply to this unanswerable charge and preferred to observe a discreet silence But subsequent events proved not only that the prophetic forecast was true, but the charges were justified and well-founded. After the war, all the minor States that had fought with the enemy against the Allies, secured their freedom and are to-day enjoying Republican Governments Poland's self-determination was provided for in one of the fourteen points of President Wilson before the Paris Peace treaty Even Turkey that had treated with contempt all warnings and spurned all tempting offers from the Allies and joined the enemies, has secured her complete independence, and to-day she enjoys greater

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

freedom from foreign interference than before the war, whereas India and Egypt that relied upon Britain's pledges and generosity and responded to the call, sacrificing both men and money in a cause in which they not only had no direct concern, but so far as Islamic population was concerned were fighting perhaps against their own religious conscience, are no better than what they were before the war, and they are still clamouring for complete self-determination, the British pledges remaining unredeemed for half a decade and longer. Even the small Balkan States that joined the enemy are better placed

However, let us return to Lenin and Russia. The German Imperialists and their allies were out to exploit to the utmost limit the difficult Russian situation, and attempted to extort terms from Russia that were not only inconsistent with the principles of Revolution but extremely humiliating to the whole nation. In vain did Trotsky and his colleagues plead and argue, and at last, feeling the position hopeless, the Russian delegation left the Peace Conference at Brest-Litovsk in disgust, adopting a curious attitude of "neither peace nor war". He directed the disbandment of Russian forces and their withdrawal from all fronts, and at the same time refused to sign the impossible terms offered by Germany, Turkey and other powers. He hoped that he will succeed in appealing to the German Proletariat to discontinue hostilities against the new Proletariat State, and thus force the hands of the Imperialist diplomats. But Trotsky's calculations were wrong. Shortly after the termination of the unsuccessful Conference, the Germans and Turks advanced on both sides, taking advantage of the withdrawal and disbandment of Russian forces from all fronts,

and in a short time a large tract of Russian territory was occupied, threatening even Petrograd. The Russian situation was extremely grave. Their erstwhile allies, British, French and Japanese, and even Balkan States, were ready to pounce on the new State, and thus nip in the bud what they considered to be a great permanent menace to Imperialist Capitalist States of the world. Thus hemmed in from all sides, with universal blockade from without and sabotage from within, army and navy both completely exhausted and worn out, both in the internal Revolution and external war, one wrong step at such a critical juncture would have meant complete disaster. Neither the Revolution nor the country could have been saved, and the recent fruits and achievements gained after years of suffering and sacrifice would have been undone in a few weeks' time, taking back the country to old tyrannical days of Tsardom with no chance of future redemption.

Once again it was the same saviour Lenin, who, with a master-stroke, redeemed an almost impossible situation. The Revolution and the newly established Proletariat State must be saved at all costs and all other considerations must give way before this one ideal. The Russian masses were once again burning with indignation against German perfidy, and all over the country there was a universal clamour for armed resistance to this impudent advance. The country was once again seething with high war-fever. Nobody dared suggest conciliation, and with each advance the terms of the enemies became more and more stiffened, such as no self-respecting nation could accept. The National Congress of Russia was summoned to decide the vital issue. There was almost an unanimous demand for war against Germany. Lenin's

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

most devoted followers and all the greatest statesmen went with the crowd. The wave of excitement and popular resentment was so great that even usually balanced minds were swept off their feet and were not capable of grasping the situation with that coolness which the crisis demanded. Lenin alone kept his head above his shoulders. He refused to be guided by the momentary impulse of the mob, and after coolly considering the pros and cons of the situation, decided on the only possible course that could save the country and the cause. "Peace with Germany at any price" was the only correct policy to tide over the crisis. He was prepared to face all opposition, break off from his close associates, to be subjected to wildest and most slandering attacks, to be publicly insulted as a German spy bought over by the enemy, to be deemed as a traitor to the country and subjected to a persecution such as perhaps no national leader has been subjected to by his own people. Interests of the cause and the country were above everything else to him. He himself may be wiped out, his political career may come to an end, he may be reduced from the most beloved idol to the most detested individual, all that to him was nothing as compared to the other terrible alternative, irreparable disaster to the Revolution and the country. In a National Assembly, where he was always accustomed to tremendous plaudits and popular applause, where he was always listened to with rapt attention and respect, on this momentous occasion he rose in an entirely hostile house, amidst cries of "traitor", "shame", "down with German spy" and such other unbearable howlings and hissings, and delivered that remarkable speech, perhaps the most famous of all his public utterances and writings, a speech that like magic wand completely

BOOK I

turned the popular tide, crumbled the opposition and ultimately led to the signing of most humiliating and surrendering peace of Brest-Litovoskey, a peace that both humiliated and at the same time saved the country and the cause. It was a historical and memorable document that was responsible, more than anything else, for preserving Russia and the new Proletariat State in the advanced, developed and progressive state as we see it today. A brief extract from that famous speech of Lenin may not be out of place here. He said —

"You must sign this disgraceful peace to save the Revolution, the Soviet Republic. You think the path of the Proletarian Revolution is strewn with roses? That we will march from victory to victory with waving flags and the sound of the Internationale. Thus it would be easy to be revolutionary. The Revolution is not a pleasure-trip. No! The path of the Revolution leads over thorns and briars, wade up to the knees in filth, if need be, crawling on our bellies through dirt dung to Communism. Then and then alone in the fight we will win. ... Yes we are now powerless. The German Imperialism has caught us by the throat, has thrown us on the ground. It kneels on our breasts and points a revolver at our heads, and I see nowhere in the West (in Russia) that Proletariat fist that will free us from the strangle-hold of the claws of German Imperialism. Give me at this moment an army of 1,000,000 men, resolute, bold and firm, and I will not sign peace. I have stepped aside and not interfered and given you full two months to negotiate with complete freedom. Have you raised a powerful army? Can you give me anything real instead of prattle and the drawing up of paste-board figures? Yes, it is a shameful disgraceful peace, but if you do not accept these conditions now, then after a month's

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

delay you will sign conditions which are a hundred times worse"

A resolute member, who had come determined to oppose any suggestion for peace, describes the impression of this speech on his mind in the following words —

"The naked fact, the bitter truth, unadulterated life itself stood before us, not theoretical considerations, not book-learning, no sentiments but life and reality in all its bitterness and nakedness"

The result was the wholesale conversion, and those who had come to scoff remained to praise, and with few dissentients, Lenin's proposition for peace "at any price" with Germany was carried

* Years after, when Lenin is no more today, there is not one in Russia, who does not acknowledge the supreme wisdom and almost super-human foresight and marvellous level-headedness that alone saved Russian Revolution and the Soviet Republic. A hasty unwise move taken in a momentary huff of popular excitement would have resulted in certain disaster. As Stalin recently acknowledged,

"Even the dumbest have now come to see that the peace of Brest-Litovsk was a timely concession that really gave us strength and power to revive and consolidate, whilst at the same time it disintegrated the forces of International Imperialist enemies of Russia"

No wonder Lenin is worshipped today more than any other prophet and Leninism has become the new religion of the Russian people

These few instances, we hope, will suffice to silence the meaningless and silly slogan-shouters, the bogus

BOOK I

Leninists of India, who more in their ignorance than fidelity to their great master, make a sorry exhibition of themselves by shouting themselves hoarse "Down with peace", "Down with compromise", and contrast Gandhi, the lover of peace with Lenin, the great fighter

This historical survey, for our present purposes, would be incomplete and lose much of its educative value without a reference, howsoever brief and perfunctory, to the American War of Independence. Though to many, it is more of an ancient history than modern politics, still in several important respects, it furnishes illustrations and instances, that would be of immense educative and demonstrative importance, particularly to the present day British M P s (Master-Prattlers) and expert bunglers, at the same time emphasising for us the necessity of complete unity and harmony into one nationhood, at a time of grave external danger and supreme crisis. Although the events being a century and a half old, may not have great political significance on the present-day quick-changing politics when the symptoms of yesterday even appear to be too stale and old-fashioned for today, still politics apart, the question being largely human, some of the psychological traits and peculiarities in British character and mentalities, displayed in the Anglo-American drama, are equally visible today in the Anglo-Indian tragedy. If the valuable lessons that American Colonists had taught to the blundering British obstinacy and blustering British arrogance, over a century ago, is forgotten at this juncture in their dealings with India, the tragedy that was enacted in America may be repeated in India, perhaps with greater disaster and calamities to the so-called "mother" country. From that point of view for us, American experiment is perhaps more important than the

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

more modern and more interesting political upheavals, even in Russia or China, and Washington should be a more popular national hero to Indian youths, than even Lenin or Kemal. That was the only struggle of a colony against the 'mother-country' that was fought to a finish and resulted in complete severance and independence for the colony. It ended in a most pathetic tragedy in the history of Mother of Parliaments, when blinded in her all-absorbing greed and desire to establish and maintain the most odious and detested theory of paramountcy of British Parliament Britain lost, not only that theoretical parental authority, but the whole precious possession and at the end of the struggle, came out with such ignominious defeat and loss of prestige, as she had not experienced before. Still in the British parties today, there are short-sighted visionaries of the old type of Grenville, Townshend and North, who are enamoured of the same tragic words, "Supremacy of British Parliament" in their dealings with Indian problems, forgetting that in these days of advanced republicanism, another refractory brown child may even more strongly resent this useless show of parental authority, and having less family-ties and blood-relationship than the White emigrant settlers, who after all came from the same stock, may more easily and more readily break off from this bogus family circle completely, and thus re-enact the same "tragedy of supremacy" one hundred and fifty years after. The feeble resistance to American imposition of Tea-tax was then as much ridiculed as Mahatma's historic and dramatic Dandi March to break the Salt-laws, and nobody dreamt, either in America or England, that such a small 'storm in a tea-cup' would so soon burst into a country-wide hurricane and break the link

BOOK I

completely Hence, though this American episode, being the most ancient, should have come first in the serial order of our narrative, it has nevertheless been deliberately kept last, because according to our school-days' experience, what is last read is best and most remembered Let the political student in India learn this last lesson and remember it best at the impending political examination that will shortly be held in the country

Although the first serious friction occurred in March 1764 when British Parliament voted that "just and necessary revenues be voted in America" and in addition to indirect taxes, additional direct duties were levied on sugar and wine by Grenville ministry, still the quarrel on principle was much older, beginning from 1732 when the Colonists had first resented British interference in internal financial affairs, when an attempt was made to fix the salary of the governor of Massachusetts In view of that attitude, displayed by the Colonies in 1732, it was expected that this fresh encroachment would call forth strong protests all round They were labouring under certain disabilities already, as under "Foreign Trade Prohibition and Transport Act" the Colonists were not permitted to trade freely in non-British goods nor were they allowed to use non-British bottoms As a retaliation to this fresh interference, the Colonials decided to start a Civil Disobedience campaign, though not on non-violent lines, they openly defied and committed breaches of the provisions of these odious parliamentary measures, and began a no-tax campaign, in the course of which a Collector of British Taxes was murdered in Boston The British Board of Trade replied by further acts of

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

repression and stiffened the regulations against smugglers and boot-leggers. Search-Warrants and Executions similar to repressive measures applied against no-tax campaign in India, were issued on large scales with practically the same results. Instead of crushing the movement, these repressive measures as usual stiffened the backs of the defiant opposition. However, simultaneously what are known as constitutional measures were not neglected. Protest meetings were held and memorials were presented to King and Parliament signed by most loyal citizens and high-placed officials like the Advocate-General and Law officers of the Crown. So long as Grenville remained in office, his ministry paid no heed to these rising symptoms, but doggedly continued the policy of mailed-fist, quite regardless of the public upheaval and agitation all round. The following year, in teeth of the opposition and by way of a reply to this particular challenge to Imperial authority, Grenville carried out his threat of direct taxation and got through the Parliament in March 1765 the Stamp Act, to be enforced from November. However, before the actual period for recovery arrived and when British Revenue officers were preparing to recover these odious duties at the point of bayonets, the Virginian House of Burgesses started a vigorous action based both on constitutional as well as "direct" action. Patrick Henry, a young Scot leader solemnly uttered a warning in the course of the debate. He said, "Henry, King would do well to look to the fate of Cæsar and Charles I for profitable examples." He was howled down with loud cries of "treason." People had not yet lost entire faith in constitutional agitation, and ultimately it was again decided as a last chance to present another

influentially signed memorial to King and Parliament, protesting against their imposition on the basis of "no taxation without representation "

In October 1765, delegates of nine States assembled in New York in a National Congress, and under the leadership of Lee Brothers and others decided on a concerted and co-ordinate united action, and for the first time issued "Declaration of Rights" In the meantime, luckily for all parties concerned, there was a welcome change in the British Cabinet, and the "Mailed-fisted" Grenville was replaced by the silk-gloved Rockingham, who adopted a more conciliatory and wise policy, and thought it better statesmanship to surrender to the popular upheaval, before it was too late, and accordingly the Stamp Act was repealed before it was enforced, and for a time there was again peace and good-will restored Richard Bland declared, "The colony will continue allegiance to the Crown, so long as she is fairly and justly treated, but fresh injuries and injustice will at once make them cease allegiance and they will automatically become aliens "

However, this happy period of peace and good-will was but of brief duration, a short period of calm before the impending storm The peace-makers remained in office hardly for 12 months The British Parliament and people had still faith in the policy of "mailed-fist", and weak-kneed Rockingham like Irwin in India, was supposed to have dealt a serious blow to British prestige, by his conciliatory policy of surrender to the noisy and defiant colonies That was a dangerous precedent and might affect adversely the solidarity and strength of the Empire. Hence a reversal was brought about and another set of steel-frame, Graffton and Townshend, like Willingdon. Hoar of our days were again placed at the helm, and the

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

new captains of the old team, were not slow to act upto the reputation, and their first official act was the reversal of conciliatory colonial policy and re-imposition of fresh taxes with a little improvement in details. So in 1767, Glass, Paper, Painters' colours and Tea became new taxable commodities for the colonies, and further to aggravate the situation, a simultaneous military gesture was made by some movement of troops and marines, to remind the colonies of the mighty strength and power of the Great Empire, they were ridiculously attempting to defy. The same old story was again repeated. Fresh protests were made, more vigorous boycotts were put into effect, executive committees were established on dissolution of Legislatures to serve as "parallel" government and a firm resolve was made not to import or deal in articles freshly taxed and thus defeat the object of these odious measures. Further indignation was caused by Government resolving to transfer some colonial agitators to England to be tried by special commission there. It was at this stage in a National Congress session, that Washington came into prominence. He declared in all earnestness

'No man should scruple and hesitate to use arms to defend so valued a blessing as liberty, as a last resort, by all means first address to them memorials and representations and then try to starve their trades and manufacturers-but failing these methods, the final appeal must be to arms'

Thus the agitation was divided into different stages, constitutional then direct action and constructive methods such as vigorous boycott resulting in starving their trades and manufacturers, and finally as a last resort, appeal to arms.

BOOK I

In 1769 Townshend ministry fell, and North ministry adopted what it considered a wise *via-media* policy. All taxes were repealed, except on tea, believing thereby that the sentiments of the colonies, who objected to taxation for revenue without representation, would be satisfied, and at the same time the right and supremacy of the Mother-country and Parliament would also be maintained. These "wise men of Gotham" with a characteristic British mentality, believed that this was a skilful and shop-keeper's solution, acceptable to all parties, little believing, that far from appeasing, it aggravated the situation and brought about the final crisis. After all the colonials were not engaged in a petty miserable squabble to save a few coins for the country. The narrow visioned British statesmen could not perceive that they were fighters for a principle, and as Burke and Chatham rightly put it on the occasion, "Great Empires and little minds go ill together" and that a statesman and politician who at the same time is not a human psychologist and cannot read peoples' minds, would be a miserable and disastrous failure. The determination of the colonials to resist this humiliation and national insult increased ten-fold, and a little incident at Boston displayed the high tension and temper of the people. Shortly after this most odious measure was passed, the Government tried, in spite of all popular opposition and protests, to land some chests of tea from 'East-India' in Boston harbour. But no sooner were they landed than the enraged and outraged crowd, seized these 340 chests of tea and threw them into the sea, thus manifesting their firm resolve not to allow their shores to be polluted by a single pound of this hated commodity. Street riots and corner fights continued, this little spark spreading the trouble all over the country.

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

and resulting in constant clashes between the troops and the people

In 1773, a regular parallel Government was established, consisting of a Provisional Committee of P H and R H Lee, Dobney, T Jafferson and others, and foreign executive was completely ignored. One of the first steps was to start a regular well-organised and well-disciplined National Militia. Thousands of people got themselves enrolled as Volunteers, and the whole colony was seething with war-fever and anti-British feeling, and George Washington was elected the Commander-in-Chief.

In May 1774, the Burgesses of Virginia resolved in a meeting that June 1st be set apart as a day of national fasting and prayers to avert civil war and for unity of people. It can be seen from this how popular national mind in all parts of the world and in different ages, works in exactly the same direction, when faced with similar crisis. The national day of fasting, prayer and "Hartals" was supposed to be the Eastern method, peculiar to oriental mind as an universal expression of national will, protest or solidarity, whereas it is surprising to find that in 1774 the colonials, struggling for national liberty indulged in exactly the same methods of agitation as in India from 1920 onwards.

More remarkable still is the fact that as in India of to-day under the Gandhi cult, so with the American Nationalists in 1774, and even later, till the actual final rupture and declaration of war, the personal relations with the local executives were most cordial and harmonious. Even after the establishment of parallel Provisional Committee, the national leaders upto last attended

BOOK I

demi-official and social functions at Government House and attended dinner and dancing parties to celebrate the birthday of Governor-General's wife, some of the leaders being the guests at Government House immediately after the dissolution of Parliament Drummond, the then Governor-General, was a very popular figure, and in-vain did he try to avert the impending crisis by making the position clear in his secret and confidential despatches In one of these despatches he stated

"Every country is now raising a company of armed men with the avowed object of serving the national militia, and protecting Provisional Committees The government decrees are entirely ignored and disregarded "

In vain did he appeal to "cry halt" before it was too late Just as warnings from Chatham and Burke were ignored, as pleas of visionaries and idealists, so even the advice of man "on the spot" was discarded as alarmist and that of a weak administrator Supremacy and prestige must be maintained at all costs and "no surrender but full steam ahead" was the Tory cry, heard uppermost within the imperial walls of Westminster

As against such pig-headed obstinacy and intransigent, unreasoning, irreconcilable attitude, the colonials would have been perfectly justified to adopt a similar impulsive, hasty, drastic measures, because after all, right and justice, and world opinion were on their side There was a large section of extremists or left-wingers who were for immediate break-off and for declaration of war without any further attempts at negotiations or futile attempts at so-called impotent constitutional methods. But be it said to the credit of the well-balanced and level-headed nationalist leaders, who

were, luckily for the colonies, at the helm of the affairs till the last and under most provoking circumstances they kept up the wise policy chalked out in the famous declaration of Washington, viz. in the first place employment of constitutional methods, then adoption of mild direct action, such as boycott, and failing these, only as a last resort, appeal to arms. Hence even so late as 1775, though with wisdom and foresight, all precautionary and preparatory steps were taken to be ready for any eventuality, on 20th May 1775, the Virginian Assembly resolved unanimously at Richmond that "a well-regulated militia is the national strength and the only stable security for any free Government, and standing armies from Mother country are both dangerous to liberty as well as very expensive, and hence the first step should be the eviction of standing armies and the establishment of national militias." At the same time Charles Lee declared "that the whole country was full of soldiers, fully armed and well-equipped. Never was such vigour and concord heard of and there was not a single traitor and scarcely a dissentient." All these were symptoms of extreme impatience and state of complete preparedness for the whole country. Still, very wisely and very discreetly, with a view even further to consolidate the nation and strengthen favourable atmosphere and world opinion, one more final attempt at peace was made, and the National Congress at Philadelphia, by a small majority, as a result of an earnest appeal from the leaders, again drafted a mammoth petition and memorial to the King and Parliament, appealing even at this last stage, to reconsider the decision and not drive them to take final drastic action. The petition was signed by all the influential citizens,

BOOK I

including the highest officers of Crown and loyalists, and was strongly backed by the Governor-General and as a further mark of respect a special deputation of responsible and respectable citizens was sent to present it in person at Westminster. In short, constitutional methods, in their 'conciliation and humiliation, could not have gone further. It is an amazing instance of absolute blindness of vision in British politics, that this humbly couched, well-reasoned, logical and just, Philadelphia petition of 1775, was haughtily turned down, and the 'deputation was almost treated with contempt. Chatham's was the only solitary voice in the wilderness that cried hoarse till it was heard no more. "But King's stubborn anger, Parliament's supreme indifference, Ministry's incapacity, want of vision and swell-headed arrogance, all conspired to refuse to make this small concession." On the other hand, even at this critical early stage, the same old notorious British game of "divide et impera" was attempted. Such Colonies or States would be exempted from direct taxation who agreed voluntarily to make a fixed annual contribution to the Imperial treasury, hoping by this ill-advised stroke of diplomacy, to cause a breach in the colonial solidarity, as it was vainly expected that some States would take advantage of this supposed concession, and thus break off from the Union and sign a separate arrangement with England. But in this they were bitterly disappointed. This policy of giving the longest rope to the opponents, adopted by colonial national leaders resulted in complete success and the final rejection of the most reasonable offer naturally resulted in whipping in the few waverers.

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

who were still hesitating and halting on the border-line

What followed is known to every student of English History, though in a distorted and biased form. The Colonials fought bravely, patiently, unitedly, fought for seven long years with varying fortunes of war. A year after, on 12th April 1776, the Congress again met at Philadelphia, and gave the only reply to the insolent challenge that self-respecting nation could give. They passed a resolution of complete severance and independence. On 15th May, all States were advised to form their separate Provisional Governments and put an end to every kind of authority under the Crown. Two years after when they felt the strangulating pressure of superior British Navy and when things looked dark for the Colonials, the carefully nursed policy of these leaders, that had all along cherished world public opinion, came to their rescue at the most critical period. Some of the important European countries that were watching the struggle closely and sympathetically, openly threw in their lot with the Americans, when they found that unaided, they might be crushed and subdued. In May 1778, there was an open alliance with France followed by Germany, Poland and Spain, thus replenishing, at a critical juncture the American treasury and supplementing recruits to Naval and Land forces, Lafayette and Stenheim, French and German Generals worked with Washington.

At this stage also happened an episode that is perhaps most interesting and instructive from our point of view. In February 1778, British Parliament awoke from its long sleep of Rip Van Winkle, and came to her

BOOK I

senses, unfortunately too late. Finding that the game was losing, and it was better and wiser to pocket an insult and their prestige, lest this precious possession be lost forever, they resolved at this late stage to revoke the former policy and renounced the right of British Parliament to tax the Colonies, and offered only such safeguards and control, as were necessary for the regulation of trade. It was their turn now to go all the way knocking at the gates of the enraged Americans, and a British Commission was despatched to America to reconcile the Colonials and humbly submit their new peace terms. But it was too late. What a complete change! What a magical transformation in three years! In 1775 the American deputation went all the way begging at the doors of Westminster, and they were literally kicked out with contempt. In 1778, after some reverses in the battlefield and finding the international development against them, the same proud imperialist Westminster humbly bent before the Colonials and sent a mission for peace, preaching as usual the sermons of good-will, the benefits of harmony, the duty of loyal and faithful children to the aged and distressed Mother-country. Of course, Grenville, North and Townshend dared not show their faces. They were sent to the limbo of oblivion after they had done sufficient mischief and harm by the policy of strong rule and mailed fist. It was necessary, not only for their own safety and benefit, but also for the security and well-being of millions of unfortunate human beings, still under the imperial heels, anxiously awaiting the "Day of Deliverance" to teach the arrogant British a good lesson, that they would remember for the rest of their lives. No more peace now. Let your hypocritical and insincere mission of peace return from American

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

shores It was turned out as unceremoniously and as ignominiously, as the American deputation three years ago from the shores of England "Fight to finish You have provoked it and you shall have it to your heart's content "

Events followed in quick succession In 1778 there was the French alliance, in 1779 Spain joined in the fray and Poland also sent indirect help By 1779 almost a stable and secure independent government was established for the Colonies, and in 1781, surrender of York town completed the British disaster and ensured American independence Two years after, in 1783, the peace of Versailles finally acknowledged the Independence of America

A few other important dates in the development of the New World may be of interest In 1778, American Constitution was ratified

1789 George Washington became the first President of the U S A

1792 George Washington was re-elected President

1797 George Washington offered Presidentship for the third time but refused, and John Adam was elected President

1799 Death of George Washington

1861 Abraham Lincoln elected President Civil War between North and South over emancipation of Negro Slaves

1863 Abraham Lincoln's Slave Emancipation Proclamation.

1865 Civil War ends, and in the same year Lincoln was assassinated.

Before we proceed to another subject, it would be useful to draw some morals that would be applicable to

BOOK I

the present political state in India from the Great War for Colonial Independence During the struggle a small section of Colonials continued their opposition to the War, and not being content with mere display of loyalty to Mother country, even played traitors' part, by secretly or openly helping the enemy Most of them were as usual actuated and impelled by sinister and selfish motives, as they, till the last, did not believe that the Colony would ultimately triumph, and calculating on the final success of the Mother country, anticipated to reap the benefits of their fidelity and loyalty to the Crown, on the day of last reckoning Unfortunately for them, their calculations went wrong, and instead of reaping the benefit and improving their position as they expected, the complete success of the Colonials and the establishment of Independence, placed them in a very embarrassing and difficult situation Their British friends could not carry out the pledges and promises of protection and rewards that they had offered and on the strength of which these loyalists had turned traitors to their country, and in spite of all the protection that the new constitution could generously offer them, the people could not so easily forget their unpardonable crimes and they became marked and spotted men, hunted and chased about from State to State, finding no peace and no refuge in any corner of their vast country They appealed invain to their erstwhile friends, the Britishers, not to desert their allies, but the British were obviously helpless, and all that they could offer was to find them an asylum in their other colony of Canada At last, being unable to bear the persecution any longer they had to desert their own land and seek refuge in the neighbouring British colony of Canada, where they ultimately settled down

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

The second great moral is for the Imperial British statesmen and politicians, and let us hope that this lesson learnt at such enormous costs, is not entirely lost, but will be of great use in giving the correct lead and guidance with regard to almost parallel Indian problems of to-day

Just as we most deplorably witness to-day the destinies of millions in India, being tossed about like a rudderless ship in a stormy sea, being made the cruel sport of British party political game, with as much levity and little gravity, as one witnesses in a British foot-ball game, so in those days, even the destinies of millions of White American settlers, were sought to be most callously sported about, according to the ever-changing unstable British party political whims. Problems so vitally and closely affecting the well-being and sentiments of a vast intelligent and cultured population, were decided, not on merits or demerits of the issues involved, not on justice or equity of the case, but these momentous decisions entirely depended upon pure accidents or upon the whims of the person who for the time being captained the British team. In the course of three years, there were three changes in the British ministry and as many reversals and upsets in the American policy, resulting in so many national actions and re-actions. Rockingham's brief regime of 12 months brought with it a brief spell of peace, harmony and good will, as a result of the policy of reconciliation and submission to national sentiment. Grenville, North and Townshend, each in turn introduced mailed-fist and steel-frame regime in varying degrees as suited their immediate political purpose and cause.

Though profited by this bitter American experience, an attempt is made to rectify the blunder by oft-repeated

BOOK I

declarations that Indian policy and Indian questions are above British Party politics, and momentous decisions and declarations are usually taken in close co-ordination of all parties. Still change in tendency and attitude in Indian policy at once becomes apparent with a change in the ministry. As Gandhi-Irwin truce was supposed to be the fruit of Labour policy, it was considered a mistake by its successors, and clumsy and dishonest attempts were made to reverse it and get behind its terms. That was undoubtedly the explanation of the aggressive and provocative attitude of the later period.

But still more important, and from the Indian point of view more valuable moral lesson for the British statesmen from the American episode, is to be derived from the well deserved "kick" they received from the colonials in 1778. There is such a thing as over-shooting the mark, particularly in management of Imperial affairs. The most swell-headed and adamant British die-hard, if he has a grain of intelligence and common sense left, would know when to cry 'halt'. No amount of penitence and humiliation shown three years after, could repair the damage or avert the disaster brought about by the usual blustering British methods in 1775, when they distinctly over-shot the mark, in most unceremoniously turning down the most humble and reasonable offer for peace, presented in a most respectful and constitutional way by a special deputation, despatched all the way to Great Britain. They allowed that psychological moment to pass, deluded by their belief in self-superiority and invincibility, that one stroke of constructive strategic statesmanship might have saved the most precious possession, consistent with their honour, dignity and prestige. That moment and god-sent opportunity

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

was allowed to pass, and three years after, in February 1778, when the situation was beyond control, belated attempts were made to repair the blunder. The attempt proved as futile as it was humiliating, when the British delegation and mission for peace sent all the way to the colonies had to return, being unsuccessful in their fruitless attempt to retrieve the situation.

It was necessary perhaps for the benefit of world peace and for the safety and security of subject races that the proverbial British arrogance and imperialistic aggressive die-hard Tory mentality should be curbed and checked by the one rude shock and reversal, in its otherwise ruthless destructive and devouring career. To that extent the world ought to be thankful to the American colonials for this one "beneficent" and instructive act, and their subsequent attitude towards at least Ireland shows that the British die-hards are still smarting under that injury. In 1921 Lloyd George, the wily Prime-Minister, made a timely surrender to the American-Irish rebel chief, DeValera, and hurriedly submitted to his preliminary demand of addressing a letter of conciliation and invitation to him direct, instead of beating about the bush, seeking for a false refuge to preserve British prestige. But the real test, whether British wisdom will come in good time, or as in the case of America, will come too late, will be seen in the manner in which Indian problems are solved.

We cannot close this chapter without a reference to the third, and perhaps the greatest moral to be drawn from this famous struggle for human freedom and emancipation. We are not so presumptuous as to feel that only the British Imperialists or the Indian loyalists would learn something to their profit and that Indian people as a

whole are already perfect and wise enough and hence need no instructions from this colonial history. It is admitted by all sections and communities and classes that unity, consolidation and organisation are the greatest needs of the day, both for the political progress and success, as well as for internal development and prosperity. Let us in all humility and earnestness turn to the great American example for the patriotic virtues and national strength.

A newly settled and recently discovered country, with no original ancient traditions, religions and cultures as in India, with a population without that natural attachment and devotion to the land that one usually cherishes towards the sacred land of his ancestral birth and old family associations, with as many varied creeds, races, nationalities as there were countries in Europe, from where all of them had migrated under distressing and cruel circumstances, and what is most important to remember is the fact that with the majority of the people, the idea of fidelity or loyalty and devotion to Mother-country, Great Britain, was not merely based on slender sentimentalism, as with so many insincere hypocrites in India and elsewhere, but a loyalty based on more solid and more sincere foundation of real family ties and close association with the soil, most of the emigrants being Britishers belonging to the same stock, in whose veins the same blood flowed as in those they had left behind in mother-land. It was a civil war fought outside the boundaries of Great Britain. Only a few years ago they had fought for the Crown against French.

Under such circumstances a fresh union into a new American nationality was extremely difficult and also unnatural. In spite of all that, at the time of immediate

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

grave danger, forgetting all their old family ties, forgetting their love and devotion to the mother-country, they were all united, so many different States, into one homogeneous concerted national organisation, to fight even against their blood-brothers and close relations, in the words of George Washington, "to defend so valued a blessing as Liberty," to protect their new hearths and homes, Germans, Swiss, Dutch, Finns, French, Scots, Irish, British, Catholics, Protestants, Presbyterians, Non-Conformists, a cosmos crowd, owning allegiance to half a dozen different countries, following half a dozen religious creeds, all for the time being united under one common national flag, as one solid nation, Americanism cent per cent, a Britisher fighting his own dear cousin, arm-in-arm with a hated German or rival French. A few years after, the great Civil War, between Northern and Southern States, showed how great and fundamental differences existed amongst the States *inter se*, the usual clash of class economic interests and psychological differences. But for the time being, all these differences were sunk into the sea, all other ties and sentiments were forgotten before one predominating, all-pervading sentiment and notion, "Liberty to the land", "Freedom to the nation", "Patriotism to the country above loyalty to the Crown", these were the American slogans in 1775. Let these be dinned into the ears of that curious Indian breed, "the loyalists' group", who find this commodity "Loyalty," particularly valuable and marketable one, at the time of national crisis and political upheavals.

What an inspiring, glorious example for India to emulate at this critical juncture in her history! With traditions, civilizations, religions, cultures and philosophies more ancient, more romantic and more spiritual,

with people temperamentally and psychologically more devotional, more tolerant and more sentimental, boasting of historical and even mythological records, certainly more proud and patriotic than the White Americans, and above all with no real attachment or family or blood ties and association with the so-called 'Mother-country', being treated more like step-children, the only common cementing bond or connecting link, being the bond of slavery and clanking chains of subjugation, thus in all respects the atmosphere and circumstances are more favourable and better suited. Is it really impossible for India to rise to the American height, when passing through similar national crisis, and at least for the time being, forget and sink their differences, squabbles and disputes, and unite and rise as one nation, impelled by one single purpose, actuated by one single motive, cemented by one bond of love and devotion to one dear Father-land, and inspired by the same national and patriotic sentiments? Can we not cluster and muster strong under one national flag, no matter of what rags or colours, and march all together, brothers and comrades in arms like our American brothers a hundred and fifty years ago, to the destined goal which is so near and dear to all of us?

Let alone the few incorrigible super-loyalists to their fate! We can afford to ignore them even as the colonials did, to be dealt with suitably after the main accounts with the principle opponents are settled. They need not be transported all the way to Canada. There are enough places of refuge and asylums in the country where they can be safely consigned. Barring that negligible quantity, let us hope and pray that this clarion call, based on American experience, will not fall on deaf ears, at

least so far as the real national asset, the budding youth of the country, is concerned.

Based on the same colonial experiences both of America and Ireland the time has also arrived, if it has not already passed, for our elders, the national leaders, to reconsider and revise their foreign policy with regard to the future national struggle. We can no more afford to remain politically isolated and detached from the rest of the international world. Even at this late stage it is highly essential to cultivate world public opinion and utilise and consolidate the wide-spread public sympathy that already exists in favour of Indian cause in various parts of the world. Particularly the Americans, having themselves enjoyed the benefits of such timely assistance and intervention, are most ready and willing in their turn to offer such moral and material support as circumstances and international conventions will permit. World publicity and international educative propaganda are recognised to be effective modern weapons in all national struggles, particularly against the mighty British Empire. America depended upon French, German and Polish assistance. Ireland successfully appealed to America and Central Europe. National China depends upon American intervention to keep the balance, particularly against Japanese and British aggression. Turkey set up France and Italy against her hereditary enemies Britain and Greece, and even modern Russia, sabotaged, isolated and cornered by capitalist States, relied upon at least moral support of Asiatic and Oriental States and people and appealed by widest publicity to the proletariat of the world. Even small Poland owes her present republic to President Wilson's advocacy in the final settlement.

BOOK I

Is India alone, the only subjugated and dominated vast country in the world, so presumptuous, so powerful and self-contained, as to disdainfully reject the proffered hands of friendship from sympathetic allies in various parts of the Old as well as the New World? Self-reliance and self-help are undoubtedly great national virtues and deserves to be carefully nursed and cultivated, but even these virtuous qualities need not carry us to the other extremes of complete political isolation and detachment from the rest of the world. We can legitimately claim, and without compunction, utilise for our national purposes, such great world personalities like Mahatma Gandhi, and Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, whose declarations and announcements today would carry great weight and reliance in any part of the world and would go a great way to counteract and dispel the mischievous and pernicious lying anti-Indian propaganda abroad.

Will the Indian National Congress seriously consider these humble suggestions and take early steps to open an organised, well-conducted and properly controlled publicity centres in important parts of the world?

Nor need one be disheartened by the deplorable inter-communal disharmony still lingering in the country. That is a human frailty and weakness noticeable in all parts of the world, the U S A, the latest and the greatest democratic state of modern times, not being free from it. There is more communalism noticeable in the Presidential election of the U S A than is seen in the Presidential election of the Indian National Congress. When the Indian National Congress has by turn accorded this seat of honour to members of all minor communities Mahomedans, Parsis and Christians, we believe that so

TACTICAL LEADERSHIP

far, the U S A. Presidentship, is still a preserve for Protestants, and in a recent contest A. Smith (Catholic) was defeated more for his religious creed than for political demerit. It is only in face of common danger that these differences are forgotten. In some of the other American States outside U S A there is even a Constitutional prohibition, based on religious faith and belief and even to-day, under the Constitution in Argentine republic, a Protestant cannot be a President of the republic. Catholicism being one of the essential qualifications for Presidential candidature. Can any one suggest in view of these current facts that India is more Communalist than these American Republican States?



‘ WHAT NEXT ? ’

BOOK II

CONCLUSIONS



CHAPTER XII

‘ Some humble suggestions for the future ’

Having endeavoured, though perfunctorily, to describe various political problems, both recent as well as remote, covering extensive areas from Peking to Stamboul and from Moscow to Dublin, not excluding the New World, with the sole object of finding some parallels that may help to solve the Indian problem, even to a small degree, we would ask the reader to keep that point in view, whilst criticising the superficial and incomplete nature of this brief political survey of the world. It is by no means intended to serve the curiosity or satisfy the keen desire for knowledge of a student bent on historical research. Many events and incidents, that certainly appear to be more instructive, important and interesting, from a general historical research point of view, have been deliberately omitted, if they were not relevant to the present topic. The only criterion applied in selecting the historical extracts, was whether they served to provide or furnish any illustration or demonstrable example, applicable and helpful to the present political situation in India.

With these available and meagre data, we shall make an endeavour to draw some conclusions and make some suggestions in connection with the Indian questions-

BOOK II

First and foremost, it is essential to clarify the issues and have a clear grasp of the political horizon with as much searchlight within, not sparing in frank and brutal but healthy and sincere self-criticism, as we have been ruthless and unsparing, in exposing, what appear to us honestly as faults and defects in our opponents.

To a close observer and student, one noticeable fact becomes quite apparent in all the political struggles in the world, that everywhere, clear-visioned and well-balanced politicians, have always made the inevitable difference and distinction between a distant political ideal and the ultimate goal, and what is within the reach of practical and immediately attainable political ends. Taking extreme instances of the most refractory (from the British Imperialists' point of view) Colony like Egypt, both and the most discontented Protectorate like Ireland, had, and still have, for their political ideal and ultimate goal complete separation and establishment of republic with a national, territorial and political unity of the whole country, union between North and South, Ulster and Dublin in Ireland, and inclusion of Soudan in the Egyptian constitution. But these goals being considered unattainable and impracticable under the present circumstances, strategic and tactical leadership in both countries has submitted to a much lesser achievement as the utmost limit to which practical politics could take them for the time being, awaiting for further opportunities, and preparing for further struggles and sacrifices, to complete their national task. Nowhere do we find them behaving like forward frowning children, who fling away in a huff everything falling short of their complete desire, and will only accept what they want at once, or have nothing at all. The complete splitting of

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

these countries into two separate political territorial and administrative units, Ulster, though an indivisible part of Ireland, treated more like a county of Great Britain, and quite an independent and separate machinery set up for Soudan, are certainly greater outrages on their national sentiments and political aspirations than mere separate electorates to various communities as suggested for India, and the Oath of Allegiance used to stick in the throats of Irish Republicans as the foreign army of occupation is a constant eye-sore to Egyptians. Still even hot-heads and irreconcilables have submitted to the inevitable for the time being, at the same time never relaxing their efforts for final achievements.

From that standpoint let us also consider the Indian problem. The ultimate national ideal and goal as unequivocally declared by the National Congress is Complete Independence. Keeping that vision always before the mind's eye, we must not be blind to the fact, howsoever unpleasant or painful, that what is or can be brought within the range of practical or attainable politics to-day falls far short of that ultimate goal. Let us not juggle with words. All the countries, from Russia downwards, have come through the final stage, through the inevitable transitional stages. The first stage of Russian experiment commenced in the year 1905, when the Tsardom was brought down from the most absolute and untrammelled autocracy, to a limited Constitutional Monarchy, though the check of the farcical Duma was more imaginary than real. The next step was February 1917, resulting in the complete overthrow of Tsardom and brief intermediate period of Capitalistic and Feudalistic Parliamentary system, a more enlarged and better controlled Duma and Provisional Government. The third

BOOK II

and final active stage was the October Revolution of 1917, when the goal they had originally in view, viz transference of power to the proletariat, was reached, and it was some years after that the new Government was established with the stability and security that it now enjoys. Thus the whole struggle, even in its last and final phase, actually lasted, with intervals, for 15 to 20 years, beginning with mere Labour demonstrations and establishment of Trade Unions and ending with one of the most disastrous bloody struggles that the world has ever seen. We may well recall the historical and famous words of Lenin (given above) when he drew a pathetic picture and vividly described before the Russian Assembly the difference between the easily expressed and enthusiastically applauded desire for a national goal, as depicted in the unanimously passed resolution for Independence in National Assemblies, amidst deafening cheers and wild scenes of enthusiasm, and the tragic realities that one has to pass through in its actual achievement. Howsoever painful and unpleasant it may appear, still we must frankly confess, that out of the millions in India that both silently and openly cherish in their minds and hearts the ultimate national goal for Complete Independence, only a very very small percentage is prepared and ready for the tremendous sacrifices and intense sufferings that its realisation means. A fairly good number out of them, like the 'slogan-shouters', that made such a sorry exhibition of themselves at the A I C C meeting in Bombay in 1930, at the first sight of danger and death will either disappear in the limbo of silence and safe oblivion, or worse and safer still, some of them will even most brazen-facedly and shamefully quickly turn the corner and take a complete

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

somersault and will shout with equal vehemence and show of false enthusiasm "God save the King" as they did the national slogans in National Assemblies to prove their patriotism. Not that this is a phenomenon peculiar to India. Every country and every nation, more particularly in the West, has its share and quota of these "humbugs" and black-sheep, and perhaps in India their number is less in proportion to the vast population and area.

Hence responsible leaders could not safely be guided in the final grave and vital decision by the mere outward momentary impulsive show of popular enthusiasm and noisy demonstrations. It would be necessary to carefully take stock of the real and genuine national strength behind this show, and ascertain how many out of these surging crowds would be prepared to stand by the flag "till unto the Death or final deliverance." Wise statesmanship and strategic commandership also demands that the total strength, power and all available resources of our opponents should also be very carefully gauged and measured before launching a great struggle. Let us not labour under a false and deceptive delusion that the British nation, that is so notorious for its tenacity and stubbornness, in matters affecting their material and national well-being, a nation that has rightly earned the title of "shop-keepers" and is proud of it, can be either cajoled, argued, persuaded or bluffed into giving up, what is correctly described as the "brightest jewel" in the British Empire, or that they can be scared out of this land by a few shots here or a few shots there, or even by the great annoyance harassments or mere losses, sustained on account of the Mass Civil Disobedience movement. The British statesmen may appear to be reasonable and

BOOK II

conciliatory, may even yield and surrender to the utmost limit in matters of constitutional reforms within the Empire, if not actuated by higher ideals of justice and fair-play, by baser motives, out of political expediency, according to the old maxim, "retention of half a loaf is better than losing the whole." But if it comes to the question of snatching away the whole loaf and not leaving any crumbs in their hands, then the world will be amazed to witness a most stubborn fight "to the last ditch and to the last man." A nation, that only a few years ago sacrificed millions of the flower of its population and tons of gold, for reasons and objects that are even today not quite apparent to many, in spite of numerous peace conferences and peace pacts, is certainly capable of much more, when the stakes involved are a hundred times more important, vital and valuable, than in the last Great War. Let us also remember that with the approach of slightest danger, all the "family" at home and abroad, no matter whatever their private differences and quarrels, flock together in aid of the Mother-country. So let us have a clear grasp and perspective of the situation before our mind's eye, without either exaggeration or over-statement, or any underrating and under-statement, without being a pessimistic, alarmist or fatalist, or a visionary idealist, neither betraying a hopeless timidity or depression nor an equally harmful empty spirit of bravado and false heroism. We must nevertheless, as ordinary men of caution and sanity, look ahead the difficulties and obstacles that beset our path, to appreciate properly the immensity, magnitude and gravity of the task that lies before us, so as to be properly equipped for our journey onward.

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

It is not necessary to give the monotonous statistical details or to repeat the oft-repeated wearisome facts and figures to prove the self-evident and universally admitted fact that it is not merely to give a picturesque, poetic or rhetoric colouring, that the apt description is applied to this Possession. In few but emphatic words, the short description "India, the brightest jewel in the British Empire," very vividly, and for us very tragically, but all the same truly, appraises the worldly and materialistic value of the Indian possession to the largest Western, Christian, Commercial, exploiting organisation and corporation, called the "British Empire." It is an axiomatic and undisputed fact that without India Great Britain would at once be reduced from her present position of pre-eminence and superiority to a third-rate power in the world. That being the case, it is but natural and psychologically quite explicable, that the Britishers who also enjoy, and rightly enjoy the reputation of being the most practical, the most materialistic and business-like nation in the world, should leave nothing to chance but take every conceivable both precautionary and preparatory measures, anticipating every eventuality or contingency that is even remotely possible, in the cycle of human affairs. A few historical dates and events may not be out of place to show how ancient, how systematic and well-laid, how deeply rooted and well concerted the British Scheme and plan of occupation has been, not like so many other invaders and adventurers, a sudden gigantic military onrush with a great display, all at once, of all their military strength, power and prowess, with the sole object of valuable loot, and as sudden departure. All the clever devices and plans that the Western Christian Nations always apply in permanent

BOOK II

usurpation and colonisation of Eastern countries, are apparent in the case of India, first approach in all humility and innocence, every step marked with caution and foresight, their original sinister motives and intentions carefully concealed, till their position became sufficiently strong and consolidated.

It was in the year 1599 A.D., that the first British Ambassador Sir J. Middelhall from Queen Elizabeth came to the Moghul Court of Akbar, humbly supplicating and praying only for some trading rights and facilities in India, and the following year, in 1600, the first Trading Charter was granted to East India Company. With their characteristic shrewdness, once having got a footing, they were not slow in quickly taking fullest advantage of this precious privilege. In 1613, the first British trading factory was established at Surat, and by a curious coincidence, over three centuries after, the first organised non-violent attack on the British Empire in India was also started in the same District, along the same shore not many miles distant from the British factory, when Mahatma Gandhi selected the historical shores of Dandi in the Surat District as the first battlefield in his non-violent campaign.

Seven years after the first factory was established here, in 1620 a similar settlement and trade factory was set up on the Hughli in Bengal, and in 1639 the settlement at Fort St. George in Madras practically completed the circle in less than two decades. In 1662, Bombay was ceded as part of the dowry to King Charles, and as if the wedding festivities are still not over, Bombay people are selected today for special treatment and entertained with particular hospitality as His Majesty's guests.

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

A century after, in 1765, the first grant of "Divani" was made to Clive in Bengal, thus transforming their charter from that of mere traders to Revenue and Judicial Administrators. By this time having secured and consolidated his position and grown into a military power, also taking advantage of the disruption, chaos and constant conflict following the decline of the Moghul Empire, the British Bull-dog began to show his real teeth and came out in his true colours as forced occupant and removed the mask of traders under which they were so far strutting the land.

In 1770, Lord North's Regulation Act was perhaps the first Parliamentary Act on India which came into force. Four years later, in 1774, North's India Regulation Act, and in 1784 Pitt's India Act were passed. In 1858, the Government of the country was transferred to the Crown after the Mutiny and Queen's Proclamation. The year 1911 saw the transfer of Capital to Delhi announced at a Grand Durbar at Delhi. In 1919 Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were inaugurated. In 1928-29, Simon Commission visited India, followed right up to 1930-33 by Round Table Conference and New Constitution. As for 1940? No political prophet will venture to prophesy.

Thus having secured the main continent, the next wise and cautious step would be to circle it round with a chain of equally safe and secured boundary of frontier states. No vast possession, inhabited by a large and foreign population, 6,000 miles away from the headquarters, could be considered quite safe, particularly in the days of difficult and slow transport, unless it was secured from the danger of any aggression from numerous surrounding states. Hence independence of

BOOK II

these border states was a constant menace to India, which must be removed at all costs. And, therefore, independent rulers round a radius of several miles could not be tolerated, and all of them fell like broken reeds in quick succession under one pretext or another. Burma was annexed in 1886, so also Nepal and Tibet were made neutral by the treaty of Lhasa, 1904, as Siam, Baluchistan (Quetta annexed 1883), and even as far as the Mahomedan Federal States of Malay by the conquest of Penang completed in 1824, and Singapore was converted into an important Naval Base for establishing supremacy in Eastern Waters. Aden, another Mahomedan State, strategically too important, being the main gateway to India through the Red Sea, was also annexed in 1839 under this general scheme of protection, and in 1857, the same long naval arm with the same far-seeing policy, reached the other end as far as the important Mahomedan Port of Perin, to serve as a base for Persian Gulf. Ceylon, that beautiful and fertile garden of the East, must also be sacrificed on account of her proximity and strategic position, as it was physically impossible even for the mighty British naval power to lift her bodily and shift her to a safe distance, the next best course was the usual one of annexation.

Thus driven by "sad necessity", perhaps much "against" their will, they had to complete an almost impregnable net-work of naval bases, with an equally strong chain of walls of surrounding frontier and boundary states, the former beginning with Perin in Persian Gulf, extending over all the surrounding waters far and wide to Gibraltar, Malta, Singapore, Penang, with Honkong and Shanghai as Eastern watch-dogs on the China sea, as far as Zanzibar in East Africa. The two

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

main entrances were carefully and vigilantly guarded by the most powerful naval sentinels at either end, one at Suez Canal and another at Aden.

The sacrifice of Egyptian independence, a premier Mahomedan State, partly as precautionary measure for protection of India and Eastern possessions, and coupled with the additional glare of commercial exploitation, is perhaps the most cruel and ruthless act in the whole of this sorry and tragic episode

Years ago, Napoleon was the first to perceive the importance of Egypt as a safe base and stepping stone to realise his life-dream and ambition of conquest of India. The idea of Suez Canal as a marine short cut through the Isthmus was first conceived by his engineers during his Egyptian campaign. Hence Red Sea was considered a greater menace than "Red" Russia years after Lord Ellenborough had frankly declared, "If Great Britain desired to have supremacy of the world, she must have one foot in Egypt and another in India." Hence this ancient land of Islamic traditions must be sacrificed for the fulfilment of a general scheme of protection and precaution, though French menace had long disappeared since the fall of Dupleix and Peace of Paris in 1763, when the French claim over the main land of India was given up

Hence the destinies of these two Eastern countries, Egypt and India, are so closely interlocked, and the independence of more than half the Islamic world depends upon the political independence of India. Still it is a cruel irony of fate that the opposition and obstruction to the political goal should come from a short-sighted

BOOK II

section of that community in India, an attitude as suicidal to Islam as to the rest of the country

The Mahomedan subjection would have been as complete and their humiliation as great, had not the general ruthless British on-slaught been marvellously checked in two Islamic countries. The only Eastern country where this game completely failed was Turkey; there in gallant and courageous Kemal, they met a real 'tartar,' who has rendered as signal a service, not only to the cause of Islam but greater still in restoring Asiatic reputation, and dealing a deadly blow to Western arrogance and prestige thus establishing the old superiority of Ottoman over Byzantine

Another set-back and reversal was also received from equally gallant Pathan, from the impregnable and unconquerable Frontier Afghan State. An attempt in 1881 for annexation Afghanistan like the other border States, resulted in one of the most terrible disasters in British history, when 15000 British men and women found their graves in that historic Khyber Pass and only one survived, as if deliberately left, to tell the tragic tale of this disaster. But what could not be secured by force of arms was achieved by diplomacy, and the position was secured by treaties, buying the protection and hostility, by means of heavy subsidies from Indian treasuries, taking further care to see that no monarch hostile to British, continued long on the Afghan throne

Another Anglo-French treaty in 1704 similarly secured the State of Siam at the other end, whereby her territorial integrity was guaranteed and Indian boundaries were properly defined

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

In addition to this rigid net work and visible chains there are a number of invisible secret locks such as ingenuous lock-smiths and clever safe-manufacturers invent to escape the gaze and scrutiny of intending looters. These are in the form of so many secret diplomatic alliances with some of the unscrupulous and equally greedy and selfish independent Imperialist countries, entered in the low and mean spirit of barter and bargain, regardless of the consequences to India. One example of such an immoral transaction was the secret alliance with Japan, 1904, a sort of convention between conspirators, whereby it is alleged Japan gave a disgraceful pledge and undertaking to offer naval and military aid to suppress a sudden internal upheaval or external attack on India, in return for most favoured nation treatment and certain trade facilities and privileges, though detrimental to the growth and development of some indigenous industries in India. It was a scandalous and mean piece of International diplomatic arrangement, the deplorable part being the willing consent of an Asiatic Race to help to suppress the legitimate aspirations of other oriental comrades. It is not possible to know all the filthy details of such clandestine conspiracies, but we presume that most of its terms were repudiated by the new Anglo-American alliance, but Japan, apparently relying on the old alliance protested against protective Tariffs introduced in India in 1932, which furnished an additional excuse for Imperial preference. Still nobody has worried to go deep into the matter and find out the exact nature of the conventions under which Japan based her claim the whole position was revised in 1933.

Another alliance of a more honourable and open nature was entered into in 1907, known as Anglo-Russian

BOOK II

alliance, whereby Russia undertook to give up her aggressive attitude towards India and her frontier and Russo-Persian boundaries were well defined. More recently after the establishment of the new Soviet regime, new conventions were entered into whereby the Russian Government undertook not to carry on official communist propaganda in India in return for restoration of Anglo-Russian commercial relations

Under an arrangement with the European powers, the control of the Suez Canal is to be perpetually with the Britishers and by similar Anglo-Persian agreement control is retained in the Persian Gulf

Every advance and progress in naval, military and aerial destructive science means so much more tightening of the British Imperial grip in India. Such new inventions like aeroplanes, wireless, and other more expeditious and efficient transport and communication media, may mean so much constructive and useful addition to the commercial travelling and transport facilities to the rest of the world, adding both to the comforts and utility, but unfortunately for us, these have, in addition, quite a different significance and are looked upon as so many more, new and more dreadful engines and instruments of Imperial defence, Imperial protection as even Imperial oppression, like bombing planes in Frontier villages, so many more effective military preparations, both to strengthen the hold of the "Mother country" as also to remove the considerable handicap and drawback due to long distance

These additional Imperial links of bondage are forged at a quicker pace than the so-called constitutional advance, and the apparent loss of internal political control, is more than compensated by these quite real,

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

though perhaps less perceptible, external physical bonds and restraints

Before new political institutions appear on the scene in the shape of enlarged and representative assemblies and legislatures, the country is dotted with additional aero-domes, wireless stations, new naval and military bases, Frontier defence works, new reserve military areas like the Bombay Backbay Reclamation lands, military railways and a hundred and one similar devices, and the cruel irony of it all is that all these new chains are forged at our costs, as so many new measures for our "protection" and "benefit" like the new Ordinance Bill in the Assembly are so many generous and sympathetic gestures of "good-will and bona-fides" for the "welfare" and "stability" of New India. Did not George Bernard Shaw say that Englishmen do everything on principle? This is 'enslavement' on Imperial principles

There are fools enough in this country who quite seriously believe that these are the "parting benefits and farewell gifts" of departing beneficent British bureaucracy, little realising that in reality they are so many hidden rods or open whips, ready and handy to be used by the old White task-master, as soon as the Brown children show the slightest symptom of self-assertion or defiance

In addition to these "wholesome" checks, further safeguards are provided by the perpetual appointment of "good boys" as class monitors, the loyal Indian Princes, to serve as additional watch-dogs and Imperial "chopdars" to keep a monitor's watchful eye on the mischievous school-boys and to report immediately to the "Head-Master", their over-lords at Delhi or Simla and even across the sea, in the event of slightest deflection, and in

BOOK II

return for their "patriotic" and loyal services, these Indian watch-dogs are to be presented with a gold collar-belt and ornamental chains to be perpetually tied down in their well-bedecked and beautiful "kennels". Their privilege is only to bark loud enough so as to give a timely warning to their masters and are not permitted to "bite". Their position is exactly similar to the "Convict-warders" in British jails. Though long term prisoners themselves, most of them undergoing a life-sentence, they are also appointed and willingly undertake to "keep an eye" on short-term prisoners, in return for some small pittance and petty extra privileges, denied to other convicts, the higher regular jail-staff, like the British paramountcy, exercise authority and impose discipline over them all, warders, watchmen and convicts, their jurisdiction extending within the walls of the whole prison-house. What an 'edifying', 'dignified' and 'self-respecting' position, quite in keeping with their ancient dynastic royal traditions, with the only difference that some of their proud ancestors only bowed to one Divine Power above, and their pigmy descendants are supplicating before the "tin-gods" of Simla or White-Hall! And in order that these Royal "Convict-Warders" may be able to discharge their onerous and responsible duties of secret watchmen and spies well and efficiently, they are permitted to employ and retain a band of "Ramoshies", the Imperial Service troops, the so-called "Indian State Forces", who are armed and well equipped at the cost of Indian treasury, including free supply of White Military Advisers, whose total strength at present is about one lakh. That is the secret contribution from these unpretentious loyal Indian Princes, towards regeneration and development of New India, their 'Father-land', in addition to

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

the "valuable" services, they propose to offer openly by joining the New Federal State at great 'self-sacrifice' and even personal loss

The same cautious spirit, and great foresight, is noticeable in the internal military policy, particularly since the bitter experience of 1857. Though we often hear from both highest civil and military authorities high words of praise and extravagant flattery for the steadfast loyalty and unshaken fidelity of both Indian troops and Police force, still, if we scrutinise the military and police arrangements more closely, we will find that the whole organisation is still fundamentally based on feelings of distrust and secret suspicions, as if the costly lesson of Mutiny 70 years ago is not yet forgotten. We must admit that this suspicion, distrust and apprehension, looking to the long untarnished record since the Mutiny, is not at all justified, and consistent with their declarations, a more trusting policy and attitude ought to have been adopted, but businessmen will leave nothing to chance better err on safe side. The military re-organisation scheme immediately after the Mutiny, consisted in great reduction of proportion of Indians to British in the army from 8 Indians to 1 British before the Mutiny to 2 to 1 after. That proportion has more or less been maintained ever since. In the present strength of about 2 lakhs troops, nearly 70 to 80 thousand are British, with the additional safeguard of having almost exclusively British officers throughout the Indian Army, and as a further precautionary measure, that no regular artillery is entrusted to Indians. Whatever justification there might have been, even a generation or two after the Mutiny, the continuation even upto date of this arrangement, particularly after the brilliant war-service and home-

BOOK II

record, is a perpetual and uncalled for slur on Indian Arms of all ranks and gives a touch of unreality and hypocrisy to all the plaudits and commendatory declarations, with regard to the Indian Army. It is the same alarmist policy that has led to the long continuation of both un-national and un-military arrangements and denominations on communal lines, such as 'Mahomedans', 'Jats', 'Rajputs', 'Gurkhas', 'Maharattas'. Thus the canker of caste and communal feelings is sought to be perpetuated and penetrated into strict military discipline by making communal compartments in regimental ranks where one would expect close comradeship and non-communal associations to prevail. The arrangement might be safer from the military point of view, but if military reputation and true military spirit is to be preserved, these unmilitary arrangements should be immediately done away with. Besides, these communal denominations also become dangerous factors, leading to the want of public confidence and trust, when during internal communal strifes, it is necessary to employ military aid, and cause unnecessary embarrassment and complications into an already difficult situation. This policy of discrimination and exclusiveness will hold good so long as the lurking suspicion and distrust continues, and all the tall talk of unfitness of Indians or their want of military efficiency or inclinations, coming in the way of complete Indianisation, is pure British bunkum. In order to increase the central control and bring the whole army under direct supervision of C-in-C with a Chief of Staff, a further reform was introduced in 1895, when the whole military and defence was transferred, as a central subject and Provincial control over separate Presidency armies was abolished, the Army Member of the Viceroy's

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

Cabinet being supposed to look after the administrative side only

It would be worth while quoting here some extracts from a paper recently read before a small conference of experts in London by Mr T Pratt, an ex-Civilian, lately Commissioner C D (Bombay Presidency) on the question of military expenditure in India. Even he complained that the enormous military expenditure in India was out of all proportion both to the total revenue as well as to the present needs. These were originally based on Russian menace and Afghan trouble, but both of them do not exist today with no possibility of revival for years. Russian policy is entirely changed and she looks more to commercial rather than military aggression, and a friendly king is installed in Afghan. Besides the relations are further secured by treaties and alliances with both of them as well as with other Asiatic countries like Japan, China and Persia. The perpetual trouble in Manchuria and Korea also diverts the attention to China and Japan, to Far East, from Indian frontiers, and hence there is no real menace of any external attack from that direction. Besides, the introduction of aerial force on Indian frontier to deal with some refractory tribesmen should also reduce considerably the necessity of a large and expensive standing army on the Frontiers. Moreover a large auxiliary and territorial volunteer force would always be available in case of emergency. The improvement in transport and communication facilities that did not exist a few years ago when military expenditures were originally fixed, are also new factors to be reckoned in the reduction. He therefore strongly recommends a great reduction from the existing inordinate figures that take away nearly sixty percent of the total revenue, so as to

BOOK II

leave a good margin for internal development, particularly for nation-building departments for the new regime

These arguments are not new, but their significance lies in the fact that this view is not only held by Indian political agitators but is even propounded by responsible official minds, thus supporting the contentions that all these elaborate preparations are more for "Imperial" safety, for this policy of safety and self-preservation first, is worked from both ends. Having adopted every conceivable external measures such as military and defence works, naval and aerial bases all round, secret and open alliances with tributary States within and independent States without, they were still not satisfied and according to the old maxim of prevention being better than cure, they started, from the beginning, with what they believed to be preventive measures also. They are more ruthless and cruel both in their execution and disastrous effects, though less perceptible than all the display of military force and offensive and defensive fortification works and measures, which led ultimately in the long run to both physical and moral emasculation of the whole nation, a slow and cruel process of emaciating this once martial and highly courageous race. Such are the effects of a deliberate anti-national system of education and rigorous enforcement of the Arms Act, making pigmies of once physical, intellectual and moral giants. Add to these the deplorable, almost insoluble communal problem.

Even the last Great War that was apparently fought for the protection of minority and subject races of the world, has actually resulted in making our position less resourceful, by further consolidating and strengthening the hold of all the great Capitalistic Imperialist States in Europe. One of the most important clauses in

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

the constitution of the League of Nations is that all great and small powers, 59 in number, that are members of the League, have to recognise and respect the territorial integrity of all States as existed in 1919, and all the Powers undertook not to disturb the *status quo* of 1919. Although that clause was originally intended to prevent the recently dismembered German Empire from re-consolidation and reorganising, still in effect, it deals as great a blow to struggling countries like India and Egypt, as under this clause no great power could take any official notice or officially interfere in the great struggle between Indian nation and British Imperialism. America that owed her salvation to foreign interference at a critical stage of her struggle and who has ever since shown occasional official gestures in sympathy with the national aspiration of subject countries, could now do no more than render non-official popular, moral and even material support and sympathy, unless she ceases to be a member of the League.

Thus, as it were with one master-stroke of diplomacy, the British have secured open offensive and defensive alliance with regard to India and all her colonial possessions, with all the Powers of the world, such as secretly existed for years with Japan and Russia. That is a cruel irony of fate for India that was deluded into making tremendous sacrifice in men and money in the hope of strengthening her national claim, but all the sacrifices have only added more links to her chain.

That is the European idea of just and fair self-determination and protection to weaker races. That settles once for all the useless prattle of some of our Indian friends who, in a moment of despair, turn with hopeful eyes Westwards, and suggest an appeal to that

BOOK II

august and "just" tribunal, 'the League of Nations', as the last and final stage in constitutional agitation

Now let the impetuous, impatient, enthusiastic, sentimental, intensely patriotic and devotional Indian youth, who so spontaneously and readily raises his hand in support of national resolution for complete Independence, who so lustily and loudly shouts "*Inqulab Zindabad*", thus giving vent to his sincere inner burning desire and enthusiasm by these external indications and demonstrations, ponder over the situation in a cooler moment after the heat of popular enthusiasm and mass excitement is over, with at least as much gravity and seriousness that he applies in solving much less momentous questions in his annual University examinations. Let there be no misapprehensions, no misunderstanding. Nobody doubts his sincerity and bona-fides, nobody questions either the intensity of his desire or reality and genuineness of his enthusiasm. None dare snub him as a mere "Slogan-shouter" or 'bubble-pricker' like those fading "Reds" of Bombay. Still all that feeling, howsoever genuine and sincere, should not blind us to the reality and immensity of our task, the almost impregnable Himalayan heights and practically impassable passes that beset our long tedious, hazardous journey before we reach the final goal. Let us repeat the memorable words of a great republican uttered years ago

"But extreme factions are never conscious of their weakness, for their feverish excitement makes them believe themselves strong, and hope is always found associated with the courage, which leads men to brave and blind martyrdom"

Perhaps the history of all the struggling nations of the world, that have already attained complete freedom

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

does not furnish another example of so much internal complications or external difficulties as this gigantic problem before the Indian nation. That does not mean that we ought to be down-hearted or depressed. On the contrary, our enthusiasm, energy and tenacity should increase in exact proportion to the magnitude and difficulty of the task before us. But that might, and should mean caution and wise statesmanship, strategic and tactical leadership, and above all, almost inexhaustible stock of patience, national suffering and sacrifice. In the words of Lenin, "In our march, we may never retrace the steps, but may have to adopt a zig-zag course with occasional halts, at times even reverse a little in search of a better path of ascent as climbers of steep ascent always find it more difficult to keep in a straight line, but always find it physically easier and bodily less exhausting to adopt a serpentine path," but never swerving from the straight moral course.

CONSTITUTIONALISM vs DIRECT ACTION

From the brief political survey of the world struggle, coupled with our own past experiences, taking into account the strength, power and resourcefulness of our opponents, as well as our own limitations and capacity, let us see if we can draw some definite constructive conclusions in the shape of a national programme for our future guidance, all the time making an earnest endeavour to keep ourselves within the pale of practical, feasible and attainable politics, and neither for the sake of mere glamour nor for mere spectacular or demonstrative effect attempt to soar higher than our political wings will permit for the purpose of practical politics, differentiating between ultimate goal and immediate objective.

BOOK II

The first proposition we must dispose of, is the one with regard to what we often hear from our Moderate and Liberal friends of India, both genuine and so-called, at home as well as abroad, viz the same old age-long controversy between Constitutional Methods Vs Direct Action. There are two classes that usually advance this argument,—one interested and the other timid. A large section of the ruling class and the vested interests, who are anxious to allow the present state to continue as long as possible, at the same time desire to assume a false mask of patriotism, justice and equity towards Indian aspiration and just demands, are never tired of pleading the efficacy of legal methods or the harm and disaster caused to the country from 'Direct Action'.

The ironical joke seems both cruel and humorous when representatives, high and low, of the British Crown and Empire, the most powerful, potential organisation in the world, mainly based on brute force, its supremacy on sea or land resting entirely on the most recent, most scientific and most efficacious inventions of destructive armaments of modern warfare, whose sole pride is that it is the greatest naval power on earth, possessing the largest number of most poisonous sea-serpents and air-falcons, who make frantic efforts to keep ahead of all other powers in the fanatic lunatic race for armaments, whose efficiency in military, naval and aerial equipment, is a standing 'example' for modern world similarly inclined to follow,—when representatives of such an empire, preach, like an old prelate or an oriental saint, the philosophy of peaceful methods, the wisdom of non-violence, the efficacy of constitutional methods alone, of "Ask and you shall be given, demand and you shall be forbidden", what man in his senses, outside a lunatic

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

asylum, is expected to swallow down his throat such a big pill? Every hypocrite who pretends to listen to such sermons with gaping mouth and eyes wide open, either in the legislative councils or outside, feels in his innermost heart and mind to utter the well-merited retort, if he had only the moral courage to do so. Does this not sound like 'the devil quoting the scriptures'? "Satan cannot preach to sinners" These very official preachers, both high and low, as soon as they leave the spiritual soil of India and land on the material shores of their own Home, either as members of Upper or Lower House, vigorously defend the military and aggressive policy and advocate a special recognition and reward for Dyerian achievements of "shoot hard and shoot well" They condemn loudly the "Bengal bomb," but in the same breath applaud the Lloyd "bomb" in Egypt, though the object of both is the same, viz to blow off the constitution by methods, far from constitutional or peaceful. Never did the cause of non-violence and peaceful methods, both from political as well as ethical point, suffer more than by such unreal pleading of insincere advocacy.

We can safely challenge them to point out a single instance in the world history, where apart from petty internal reforms or redress of some local grievances there has been a complete or even a substantial transfer of political power from one class to another, and particularly of a complete or partial abdication by foreign rulers and vested interests, without some sort of "direct action", in most cases of a violent nature. It was in the days of Cromwellian Commonwealth, years before French, American and Russian Revolutions, centuries before Mahatma Gandhi was born and preached his

BOOK II

doctrines of Civil Disobedience, that the British soil first gave birth to the political creed of qualified obedience and restricted allegiance to the Crown and Government. So far back as 1650, the British Catholic priest, Thomas White, openly preached from the pulpit and published a pamphlet entitled "The grounds of Obedience and Government" maintaining that the people are only bound by the Oath of Allegiance under certain conditions and are released from the obligation of obedience by the evil conduct of governors and maladministration of government, and the Britishers were the first, so far as historical records show, to act up to this political creed and doctrine and not only launched civil disobedience and no-tax campaign, but went to the extreme length of deposition and execution of their monarchs—Richard II (1490) and Charles I (1649). Justice Hale, high Constitutional authority, upheld this defiance of people as justifiable. Freedom-loving Britons even today take legitimate pride in their country being the first to raise the standard of revolt against autocracy. Are these instances of violent direct action or parliamentary constitutionalism? It is only a question of degrees, the same course of conduct and action, arising out of same motives, if successful, will deserve the higher appellation of "Establishment of new regime and new constitution", and the authors will be extolled and welcomed as new rulers and administrators, but if it is followed by failure and disaster, then it is at once denounced as treason and rebellion and the perpetrators are dubbed as rebels and are marched to the gallows. British history of that period furnishes the earliest instance of not only royalties but high noblemen and royalists like Lords Primrose, Hamilton, Holland, Campbell, Sir John and sco-

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

res of others similarly high-born and high-placed, put to most cruel and tortuous deaths for no other crime than professing loyalty to the Crown and espousing the cause of royalty, and the other Christian countries of the West have since followed the worthy or unworthy example first set forth by Great Britain before the world, and since then the American War of Independence, the French and Russian Revolutions have spread "infection?" to the Christian countries in the West and "poisoned?" the more spiritual soil of Asia, as evidenced by more recent troubles in China and Turkey In a small degree but in pursuance of the same Western Christian doctrine, we can explain the minor upheavals in British colonies like Canada, South Africa, and last but, by no means the least, in Ireland

It is true that very often a preparation and show of fight will prevent actual fighting There are instances of so-called bloodless revolutions as experienced in various degrees in so many recent political evolutions in Europe such as Greece, Spain and Portugal, and on Eastern side, the remarkable example of Persia and the most recent illustration of Siam In all these cases, the timely or discreet surrender only to avoid serious consequences or to secure better terms, may have rendered the final application of direct action or brute force unnecessary

But the student of politics will search in vain the historical records, both ancient and modern, either in the East or West so long as human nature is what it is, where there has been a willing abdication of power on the one hand or assumption of free political status on the other, without an actual use or readiness or preparedness for use and application of effective "sanction" of some sort of direct action, unless it be a case of getting

BOOK II

rid of a useless financial burden like the much-advertised instance of Iraq Independence. The knowledge of that historic fact being acquired by Indian youth as a result of training imparted to him on Western lines, more with a view to convince and impress him with the prowess, gallantry and greatness of the "superior" Christian races of the West, so as to make him know and understand his "inferior" place and position, whilst dealing with the West, has created an effect and impression least expected and desired. The politically and nationally-minded Indian population cannot be blamed now if they have lost all faith in pious declaration and wise platitudes, and fling back pages of European histories, in reply to futile arguments and ridiculous pleas of constitutional and peaceful methods alone or futility of direct action. Besides, these teachings of history receive daily confirmation in his day-to-day political experience of his own times and his own country.

The Indian National Congress for forty years of its early existence was a lifeless impotent political body so long as its activities were confined to what are known as constitutional methods. Great political evolutions and transference of power apart, even such petty but essential administrative reforms as separation of judicial from the executive functions or reduction of military expenditure could not be effected, and the forty years' Congress record makes a sorry and pathetic reading. Every year like a theatrical company or circus troupe, the show was shifted from one centre to another, giving a monotonous exhibition of both foreign and forensic oratory, both the leaders and the huge audience treating the whole affair as a great and glittering annual Christmas pastime, both of them forgetting all about it as

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

soon as their holiday trips were over, and they were once again yoked to their daily lucrative routine work most of them as flourishing lawyers, some as dispensing doctors and fewer still as exploiting traders or merchants. The delegates toiled back to their desks except the unfortunate many who annually swelled the number of the "Great Unemployed." Thus the Congress wheel rolled on, year after year in dull, dismal, deadly monotony, sometimes being relieved by some mild excitement, when there was a keen rivalry and competition, as to who should be included in the long list of petitioning mendicants to form deputation to Viceroy, Governors or even lesser satraps. There were "sacrificing" souls enough for this job. They went not in their 'loincloth' but punctiliously observing from top to toe the official regulations and attired, beginning with the glittering court pump-shoes to the tall bowler top-hat. They expressed satisfaction with the visits, because the high personage had received them with great courtesy, shown them princely hospitality, even invited them to dinner and drink (not the goat's milk). In short the expensive and pleasant undertaking was successful from every point of view except one. They could prevail upon the satrap to do everything except grant the petition or request, the object of the deputation. Thus both, encouraged by the personal treatment and undaunted by official rejections, with wonderful patience, perseverance and tenacity, they repeated this process for forty years, piling up the Congress shelves with heaps of these annually repeated and annually rejected resolutions, aptly described as "Omnibus Resolutions of the Congress." That was the position of the premier political organisation in the country until about Surat

BOOK II

Congress when the situation was slightly improved by the strenuous efforts and courageous fights put up by that "Maharashtra Lion" Lokmanya Tilak and others

Not that the leaders of those days were wanting either in patriotism or intelligence or political education. Perhaps intellectually they may be placed on as high, if not higher level than the present day stalwarts. But they were the unfortunate victims of the antediluvian method of political agitation, and being great votaries of constitutionalism, they adhered to that form till the last, regardless of the zero results achieved. The fate of all the other political organisations and institutions was no better, and they subsisted more or less as so many glorified "Debating" Societies of greater academic interests than political results.

It was only from 1919, since the introduction of even a mild form of "Direct Action" by Mahatma Gandhi that real "life" has come into the political activities of the people, and the country has been lifted from the humiliating mendicant position of petitions, delegations, and at most supplicating as witnesses before a White Commission, to a more dignified more self-respecting and at least more manly, and to some extent more effective attitude of sitting round the same table, round or square, as equals and not, as hitherto, picking crumbs from below the table, occupied only by the White "bosses".

Is forty years not a sufficiently long trial for constitutional methods, and is it in any way surprising that the patience of most tender-hearted, peace-loving, sober and level-headed men like Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Malviya should be exhausted, and that even

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

that proverbially cool and unperturbed, poetic and philosophic mentality like Dr Tagore's should lose its poetic serenity and occasionally get irritated? How could you expect then the large majority of population, with normal mentalities, being neither philosophers, poets nor saints but just ordinary human beings with all human frailties and weakness, to retain any faith either in this exploded method of agitation or in the British sense of justice and fair-play? For let it be clearly understood and known once for all that nearly 90 per cent of the nationally minded and politically inclined population of the country does not believe in the good faith or bona-fides of the British statesmen. It is better that this bitter truth be known rather than they should be deceived and misled into a difficult position by false flattering and hypocritical assertions to the contrary. Most of the declarations of loyalty or advocacy for British sense of good-faith and justice, originate either from base motives of self-interest or personal safety, or worse still from timidity or lack of moral courage. The louder and more emphatic these protestations, the greater suspicion should be attached to them. True and sincere loyalists out of pure convictions, will never make a parade of their genuine feelings and sentiments because for them these sentiments are too sacred and are to be cherished in their hearts in secrecy rather than bartered away for some worldly or material gain. Loyalty as well as patriotism should have their own reward and satisfaction, and there is nothing baser than either to expect or accept a reward from either of these high or pure sentiments. Unfortunately, to some extent, both these sentiments have become cheap and debased, like ordinary marketable commodities to be bargained

BOOK II

away in exchange for a worldly or material price, the so-called marks of "distinctions" and "titles", the lowest form of reward for loyalty, very often possessing exchange values similar to share or bullion transactions. The reference to poets, philosophers and saints has led us into ethical and philosophical digression, and we must revert back to the hard political controversy, viz, constitutional versus direct action

Though we have endeavoured to prove in the previous pages, both the efficacy and necessity of some form of "Direct Action" in the course of national evolution, we deem it equally essential, in the national interests, also to sound a note of warning, against a precipitate, ill-timed or hasty use of this weapon, it is a double-edged sword to be used sparingly, only when extreme necessity justifies, and all other normal methods have failed. National interests and country's welfare ought to be the sole and only guiding factor, capacity of the nation to bear and resist as well as the strength of the opponent to sustain and inflict, the state of preparedness of the people, the national awakening and economic condition, all these considerations must be duly weighed and considered before launching into such a tremendous and momentous experiment, there should be no element of speculation and nothing should be left to chance or even to destiny. And this effective Indian weapon must, as far as possible, be reserved for the achievement of final political goal and not cheaply used, as an ordinary rod, for all and sundry comparatively petty local provocations, aggressions and grievances. We must realise that the game is to be played by two, and a half-hearted blow or failure or fiasco may cause national re-action and depression, and result in greater disaster and set-back. All the grave and.

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

inevitable costs and consequences must be well calculated beforehand and neither sentiment, huff, irritability or momentary impulse, should be allowed to obsess cool judgment, true vision of all realities or reasoning logic, level-headedness and balanced minds are supreme virtues and essential qualifications in national leaders, particularly at the time of great national crises, if such little caution and political wisdom is displayed, no deplorable occasions to regret or discredit 'Direct Action' will ever arise. In politics, as in all other human affairs, 'nothing succeeds like success' when the ultimate results are achieved, the methods, means as well as the motives, are entirely forgotten, vice-versa 'nothing damps and damns like failure'.

Even a superficial student of modern political history will observe this one essential significant feature in all great mass-leaders or organisations. To take only one illustration from many, the Bolsheviki and Lenin in Russia for years, submitted almost tamely and meekly to all sorts of humiliations, repression, insults and atrocities, during a fairly long preparatory period, necessary for organisation and consolidation, submitting to all sorts of surrenders and compromises on smaller issues, determined to avoid direct conflict and struggle with the opponents, mostly by keeping out of the way as 'exiles', till as a result of whirlwind campaign, intense propaganda and patient labour, the responsible leaders were satisfied that there was enough conserved stock of national strength, popular enthusiasm, mass-energy and determination to carry on the struggle to a successful end on the main issue. The 1905 rising, though from a popular point perfectly justified, and wantonly provoked by the authorities, still resulted in a national disaster and caused a great

BOOK II

re-action and depression, because it was prematurely precipitated. The leaders never forgot that bitter experience and lesson learnt at such enormous costs, and hence for 12 years there were no more heroics displayed, till the final blow, and then the whole policy was reversed and leaders went to the other extreme of 'fight to finish'

Even though the Congress Goal is much less ambitious, with weapons and methods as far apart as opposite poles, still the same tactics and strategy should be carefully considered and applied with advantage. Instead of being over-sensitive over comparatively minor local issues and wasting all national energy, strength, sacrifice and suffering on side skirmishes, this wonderful and effective mass armoury, though non-violent, should have been carefully conserved and preserved for the final important battle on direct vital political and constitutional issue, that would have been in accordance with the wise 'wait-and-prepare' policy, so successfully followed under similar circumstances by all other mass-leaders

The 1930 Civil Disobedience campaign was a timely master-stroke. The Congress had so far indulged in tall talk alone, and an exhibition of its real potentiality and capacity was necessary to convince our shrewd and rather sceptical opponents, that it would not be quite safe and easy to deal with such a powerful political organisation, with such a tremendous man-power, and backed by such an effective, though non-violent, mass direct-action.

The experiment was completely successful. The results were marvellous. The sudden and welcome change in the attitude of British Parliament, Cabinet and Public towards India, the unexpected awakening of the long dormant British conscience, the gentlemanly even

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

apparently equal treatment accorded for the first time to Indian representatives, the Premier's reference again, for the first time of a 'treaty' on basis of equality and partnership between the two nations and actual pact, also for the first time, between head of government and sole representative of people, all due to the newly inspired respect for and dread of the national Congress, equipped with the potential weapon of 'Direct-Action'

The Congress, like a wise tactician, should have tiaded longer on that well-deserved, so dearly-earned and recently acquired political belligerent reputation. It should have allowed that sword to hang for some time more over the heads of the opponents, as often a mere threat to strike again, is more effective and serves better purpose than a half-hearted, weak and exhausted second blow. Though the second struggle in 1932 was, so far as our opponents are concerned, premeditated and pre conceived, still, knowing or even suspecting the sinister design and ulterior motive, it should have made every endeavour in its power to avoid the conflict that was deliberately provoked, a little more tact and a little less sensitiveness. Short time before the return of Mahatmaji and the final rupture, would have enabled it to steer clear of the plot and avoid the carefully prepared pitfall. The intervening fairly long period of three years would have amply sufficed to prepare, consolidate and re-organise for the final great struggle on the more momentous direct constitutional issues. By 1933 the whole political India, including communalists and constitutionalists, was completely disillusioned, disgruntled and dissatisfied. They too would have helplessly walked into the Congress parlour and sought the only possible refuge under the protective and still powerful wings of the Congress.

BOOK II

The Congress, thus rejuvenated, re-organised, re-consolidated and re-united, with its recent reputation as a great and only political fighter in the country, would have been a factor difficult to resist, impossible to ignore with safety, the only national safeguard against the quick-changing and accommodating British diplomacy, the only effective means of compelling fulfilment of solemnly given pledges and enforcing terms of 'pacts' and 'treaties' which without a sanction to enforce become mere 'scraps of paper'. Thus backed, supported, strengthened and united, at the critical and proper time of the Bill, it could have formulated and with dignity and self-respect formally presented the Minimum National Demand,—Purna Swaraj' or "Substance of Independence"—and even the most arrogant and conservative British die-hard dared not have trifled with or ignored the United Will of a re-awakened and powerful people. All that might have happened had not the superior but less scrupulous British diplomacy, notorious all over the world, secured a triumph over the Congress by precipitating a premature fight in 1932, in a game of political strategy and tactical leadership.

Lastly, to strengthen the case for 'direct action', let us apply the same simile so often used by the critics of 'direct action' to condemn this method. In a pompous style and with assumed wisdom, they loudly declare, "We must be builders and not destroyers." But they forget that the first act of all good builders and solid constructors, if they want the structure to be lasting and sound, is to pull down dilapidated old structures, remove garbage and rubbish-heap from the selected plot and then start with entirely new materials. So also with the structure of Law and Society, as the famous British

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

publicist Aldous Huxley, addresses through a 'leader' the following words to the 'British Freemen'

"Today we are an army of outlaws Yet a little while, my comrades, and it will be an army of those who break them For before we can become makers of good laws, we must be the breakers of bad laws' We must have the courage of our outlawry British Freemen, fellow-outlaws will you have that courage?"

Thus in all natural evolutions, there is a season for destruction and a period for reconstruction, if the time for reaping, harvesting, as well as for cutting or destroying superfluous, harmful weedy growths, is properly observed, the result, on the whole, is bound to be beneficial

* Hence, though criticism may be levelled as regards some details, still it is futile and too late in the day, either from motives of personal safety or self-interest, or due to timidity and moral cowardice, to denounce this method of 'direct action' as a fighting weapon, as a last resort to a disarmed subject people Everyone is convinced by now that without the application of even this mild moral force, there is absolutely no chance, no hope of revival for this country The more relevant, pertinent and important question, and one to be considered most seriously, is what is the nature of the "sanction" or 'Direct Action' that is more practical, feasible and suitable to the present political conditions in India In other words, the question is no more between 'constitutional methods' versus 'direct action,' but between Gandhism and Bengal "Terrorism" The Moderates and Liberals are no more the present or future political rivals of the Congress The future contest for supremacy in the Indian political field will be between the novel

BOOK II

and more spiritual and moral method of non-violent non-co-operation, or passive and civil resistance and the less humane but more material age-long Western Christian method of "Bombs" and "Bayonets" The former no doubt starts with a handicap because it is a novel political experiment, perhaps tried on the huge mass-scale for the first time, whereas the latter has the advantage of numerous experiments successfully tried 'Gandhism' cannot point out a single instance in the world outside India where such a political phenomenon has achieved even partial political success, whereas its rival creed, even boastfully points to both European and Asiatic histories, modern as well as ancient, furnishing so many tempting and dangerous precedents, the most recent and not the least dangerous being the last Great War That is the real situation and let us face it with courage and a sense of responsibility without hypocrisy or political buffoonery

Let us also correct another common error ' It is a mistake to suppose that the Congress or any other organisation or individual gives a particular political "Lead" to the masses It is just the other way The masses first attain a particular political level, and in their turn lead both the leaders and the organisation It would be psychologically an impossible phenomenon, even if it were tried, to endeavour to push back by artificial or unreal means mass psychology or mass political mentality, after it has made a certain advance and reached a certain natural political level, as a result of progressive mental evolutions by different stages If the leaders and the organisation do not keep pace and attain the same level, they will be left behind as back-benchers, but the onward march will continue, either with the same or new

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

organisation If the Congress had not in good time changed its methods in response to the popular demand, it would have at once lost its hold and immediately been reduced to the same level of the present day Moderate and Liberal Associations, political institutions of leaders only without any following The Surat Congress, nearly 30 years ago, was a timely warning, and no politician or statesman worth the name could have afforded either to ignore that warning or refused to take notice of the rapidly developing symptoms in the mass political mentality True wisdom and statesmanship on the contrary demanded to lead this surging tide into proper channels and outlets, rather than allow the whole country to be politically inundated with political flood-waters, running in whatever outlets and opening they found

Let all parties interested in the future peace, progress and well-being of the country take a serious and careful note of this fact, that just at this critical moment, the impatient impulsive political Young India is at the cross-road, the junction of two ways, still halting, hesitating and undecided, as to which path to tread, which course to adopt Two perplexing sign-boards, perpetually assail his eyes, the one called the "Gandhi-Road" It does not seem very attractive, tempting and inviting enough to many To his confused mind it appears to be weary, dubious, devious, unduly long, unexciting and monotonous He does not feel quite certain of reaching his much aspired and much desired destination by entering the "Gandhi Road" corner The other sign-board bears the more attractive and the more militant name It is called the "Gun Powder Road" It appeals more to the juvenile imagination of some, as he, rightly or

BOOK II

wrongly believes it to be the shorter cut with a journey more exciting and interesting. In short, he believes that is the road for the adventurous youth, the other for safe hoary age. Let there be no mistaking. He has already made up his mind to complete his journey by either of these routes, and no amount of cajoling, persuading or threats, and even corporal punishment, is going to lure him to any third path. He is convinced that there is no third path to reach his destination, and those who want to lure him away from these two, only wish to waylay him so as to prevent him from reaching his destined goal.

That describes vividly though metaphorically the present situation at least so far as the youth is concerned, and after all in a national problem Youth is the only, if not the most important factor, to reckon with.

All wise and experienced police regulators of traffic, dealing with large crowds, are aware of a peculiar mob tendency. Either out of pure curiosity or in a spirit of adventure and defiance or mischief, it always tries to rush on and force its way through the "reserved" or "prohibited" area. It is a rule of human conduct, as old as Adam and Eve, always to aspire and desire to possess, regardless of the consequences, the "forbidden fruit". The greater the restrictions, the more the attractions, and recruitment is in exact proportion to futile bureaucratic attempts to crush.

However, that is not our lookout. Let them try to restore if they can the "Sapru" road long out of repairs and thoroughly dismantled, with the help of all the available heavy steam-rollers stocked in the Councils, Legislatures or Executive stores. They may make it as pleasant and beautiful as the Piccadilly Avenue. Nevertheless, the future political "Pilgrim's Progress" will,

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

under no circumstances, be lured into that "Paradise Drive", because they know and feel convinced, that with all its pleasantry and scenery, in reality it is a blind alley and will lead them not to their aspired goal, but to a cruel rocky impregnable wall, and in the long run they will have to return to one or the other path

In our dealing with the youth of the country, we must also remember that the vast majority of them are just the same stuff that youths are made of, and that only a very very small percentage of them have received the higher ethical and moral 'Ashram' training, the rest and the large majority of them are brought up in the ordinary daily normal school of hum-drum life. As such, they are all subject to the same human weakness or frailties that a man of the world is akin to. It is better to consider the material we actually possess and not dream of "things celestial". That being so, it would be advisable at this stage to keep religion and politics strictly apart. Lest we should be misunderstood, let it be cleared, that we do not in the least suggest that we should, in any sense, lower our moral standard and adopt the Western maxim that "everything is fair in love and war". Preserving our political honesty and keeping ourselves completely above board in all public affairs and public duties, we must not make much political "fetish" about old religious ancient traditions or "Vedic" or 'Koranic' philosophy. To be quite plain and brutally frank the so-called doctrine of "Ahimsa" loses much of its political weight and significance, particularly with a large section of nationalist youths, by being given entirely a religious tinge and colour. To appeal to the imagination of political Young India, as a whole, and not to

BOOK II

"Ashramites" alone, the doctrine of Non-Violent Non-Co-operation, Civil Disobedience and Passive Resistance, must be made out as an effective, efficient and potential political weapon, and it is not enough that its claim should be made to rest on vague and ephemeral description like "Religious faith", or because it is in accordance with ancient Hindu culture. The National Congress being primarily an advanced radical political organisation and not merely a social religious or communal reform association, the national programme must be based and founded on political considerations alone and consistently with ordinary morality and normal propriety, what is the best, quickest, shortest and least disastrous way to achieve the political goal of the nation. Neither the masses nor the normal intelligent political mentality is expected to rise to "Mahatmic" heights, and a programme based on any other assumption is bound to end in failure and disaster.

Human mind is naturally inclined towards old and tried methods, and looks with special suspicion at all new untried experiments, particularly when such precious and valuable stakes as the liberty and emancipation of millions are involved. We cannot meet such historical arguments based on apparent sound logic and reasoning, by merely quoting in reply to them, old Hindu scriptures and 'shastras' in support of the religious doctrines of "Ahimsa". A desperado with a pistol in one hand and poison in the other, has neither the time nor the inclination, and is not in a mood to listen to religious philosophical sermons, but you convince him with equally realistic political arguments from every day affairs of our lives. Let us rather explain to him that Indian problem is unique by itself and it is not quite safe to

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

draw parallels and comparisons in all details with other national struggles in the world. Whilst we may accept the general principle of mass human conduct as demonstrated in similar mass movements in other countries, the peculiar difficulties and handicaps stated above differentiate the case of India so far as the applicability of the same methods is concerned. It is no use exasperating them by making a senseless and even dishonest attack, questioning either their patriotic motives or even their valour, courage or spirit of self-sacrifice, going to the absurd length of describing their acts as "cowardly" or "dastardly". In most cases, these "post-mortem" verdicts do not reach the dead and the departed, and what value this worldly public opinion could have on those survivors who, having rightly or wrongly, staked their lives to the cause, are prepared to quit the world at a moment's notice and join their departed comrades. Those who are prepared for suicides will not much care for "life-certificates". On the other hand, the use of intemperate and extravagant language, on such tragic occasions, does greater harm, and their resentment drives some to further acts of desperation, invariably leading to more disaster. What are described as cowardly and dastardly acts are but parts of military strategy common to all acts of violence and terrorism, hiding behind the "dug outs" or trenches and seeking safety behind embankments and fortifications, flying in the air above and beyond the reach of human target or concealing under water, waiting for an opportune moment to launch an attack on unprepared unwary opponent, and worse still, bombing civil population in towns and villages. Are not all these described in ordinary military and war parlance as acts of

BOOK II

courage and bravery, at times meriting special military distinction? The exploits of the enemy ship "Emden" bombarding defenceless coasts and towns were applauded as great naval feats. But looking at them from a non-military ordinary human standpoint, all these acts appeal to us as cowardly and dastardly if they were not covered by the deceptive phraseology "Military strategy."

A sincere and heart-felt condolence for the unfortunate victims, with a dignified protest and clear expression of disapproval at the conduct of these "misguided" youths, would serve the purpose equally well in creating public opinion on the subject, and might perhaps produce better effect on the future assailants. Let us not forget that we are dealing with intelligent, educated, and certainly patriotic youths, who as sincerely believe in the efficacy of their own methods as we do in ours; therefore, the only argument they can listen to, the only appeal that will reach their hearts, are arguments and appeals in the name of the country. That the "new experiment" by the Congress is more practical, more feasible and above all, more efficacious, to achieve the object, which is common to both. If we cannot convince them on the ground of political expediency alone, then be assured, nothing else will convince them, and instead of improving, the situation will be much worse, as our recent experiences prove, till very soon it may become unredeemable.

Let us quote the scriptures they believe in and not throw at them the "Shastras" and "Bible" they have long discarded. Their prophets are revolutionary leaders from Lenin downwards. Let us serve them with Lenin "Soup" and not any other. Has not that great Russian

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

revolutionary repeatedly declared, both for his country as well as for general consumption of the world, that individual, spasmodic, disorganised acts of terrorism, far from advancing, always retard the national progress, because these stray acts are not powerful and effective enough to make the opponents surrender, but only afford a sufficient excuse and justification for introducing most ruthless repression, that often reacts on the newly awakened mass-consciousness and thus retards and delays the general political awakening in the masses, which is an essential condition to national success

On account of the most elaborate military, naval, aerial, diplomatic and international preparations and measures that we have noted above, coupled with no possibility of external aid, complete emasculation of the whole nation due to rigorous enforcement of the Arms Act and lack of military training, physical culture and national education, the successful policy of "Divide and Rule", the difficulty of attaining homogeneity of one race and nation in the national sense, absolutely dependable fidelity and loyalty of military and naval forces and of the Indian Princes,—all these are potential and powerful causes that militate strongly against all kinds of terrorist methods, open or sub-terrenian. Considering these circumstances, most of them peculiar to India, don't you honestly think that we should hesitate and ponder before blindly applying other historical parallels in every detail ?

Then as practical politicians let us face the situation bravely and squarely. If constitutional methods, after fifty years of trial are found hopelessly wanting, if other "direct" methods tried by modern and ancient world

BOOK II

are impracticable and not feasible and may make India a "free" country in the sense that "Deserts of Saharah" are also "free" from any political domination, what other course is left to us but the one suggested by the Congress, which besides being politically more expedient, incidentally also places India on a higher moral level, and there is an honest attempt to raise our country, politically, morally, economically and socially, perhaps rendering a unique country in the world

The next few years, as the real testing period for this great "experiment", will be the most critical, both in the history of the congress as well as of the country and will need very tactful and careful piloting to carry it through the stormy seasons and treacherous bed-rocks, assailed by a ruthless and most short-sighted bureaucracy on one side, and beset by the rapidly rising and progressive political rivals, the terrorists, on the other, these powerful factors, attempting to crush it, working for the same object, though with fundamentally different motives and disastrously different results To the terrorists, extinction of the Congress may mean the removal of the greatest obstacle from their way, as it at present acts as the most powerful policing force against their organisation, restraining and checking their recruitment, as no government measure can do.

Thus having demonstrated the absolute necessity of "Direct Action" and the suitability and feasibility of Congress methods as a new experiment, as against the usual violent methods hitherto applied by the world we will now proceed to examine the present Congress programme as well as the course to be adopted in the immediate future.

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

First let us humbly turn the searchlight inwards, and with an unbiased and unprejudiced mind of a self-critic, probe in the existing defects and drawbacks, to profit by the past experience for further improvements, so as to ensure better success for the future. The resolutions of the Working Committee of the Congress of the years 1930 and 1932, initiating the Civil Disobedience movement have been criticised from two different stand-points by two different political schools. To some, they have appeared too drastic measures, too hastily adopted. We have attempted to reply to that criticism above, and proved that, far from being hasty, the first resolution of 1929-30 was rather belated, and further policy of "wait and see" on the part of the Congress would have been as disastrous to the country as to the prestige and reputation of the Congress. That was the only possible step on that occasion, and the Congress would have lost its claim to be considered the only representative political organisation in the country, if on that critical occasion in 1929-30 it had not accepted the insolent challenge and made the only reply consistent with the national self-respect and national interests.

To the other section, the left-wingers, on the other hand, the national programme was too mild, either to appeal to the imagination of the youths, or to create a sufficient impression on the minds of our arrogant and swell-headed opponents, not sufficiently effective, comprehensive or forceful to achieve the object intended viz, paralysing the existing system of government and compelling it to yield to national demand. To a superficial observer, this criticism appears to be justified particularly by the apparent results actually achieved.

BOOK II

after three or four years of most persistent and strenuous struggle

After all, in initiating a national programme for a country and population so wide and so varied, for universal observance and acceptance, the framers have seriously to bear in mind several considerations. The preparedness, the capacity of the nation to bear and sustain, the extent of political awakening amongst the masses, the training so far received and the economic and general conditions of the country, all these points of view are to be carefully weighed and considered. The first programme has stood all these tests well and attained success beyond expectations. After all, we have to remember that this was the first political experiment on a huge country-wide scale, when the non-violent conflict was to be direct, between the nation and the government on all-important and vital national issue, and in that respect differed from all previous experiments that were limited to a local economic issue as well as to restricted areas.

In all national struggles, there is always what is known as a period of preparation and recruitment, a period to be devoted more to the political awakening of mass-consciousness, when the country's call and message is to reach every individual in the remotest nook and corner. That is a period when demonstrative propagandist, educative and even spectacular sensational items in the national programme, play an important part, and what may appear to a superficial outside observer a mere waste of national energy, strength and even money, is from a mass-psychological point of view, of immense importance, to shake off an age-long political lethargy.

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

-and create a new vision and burning throbbing political life for the country In that period a pinch of salt is as effective a political weapon in India, as a chest of tea was in America The first spectacular act that roused the American people and considerably helped recruitment to prepare for the great fight for independence was the throwing into Boston harbour 450 chests of tea that were forcibly landed by the authorities, in spite of national protest, to defeat the resolution to boycott A large section of sober Americans and Englishmen of those days, condemned and denounced this, as an act of wanton mischief and vandalism, exposing their folly and bankruptcy in statesmanship, retarding rather than advancing the cause

Exactly similar criticisms were levelled against such spectacular shows as huge bon-fires of foreign cloth or against the more elaborate and demonstrative "Dandi" March, the idea being described by some as ridiculous or silly, at first not even worthy of the serious notice of authorities Yet these two dramatic demonstrations, one in America, years ago, and another in India in modern times, were more responsible than months of agitation and propaganda, to set both the countries ablaze, so that the authorities had very soon to change their attitude from ridicule to serious action Therefore, this programme has undoubtedly served its purpose, apart from being an endless source of annoyance, harassment, anxiety and tremendous losses, if not completely paralysing the whole machinery, at least blocking and clogging its important parts, and making the situation extremely uncomfortable and to some extent intolerable, its real value lay in the great mass-awakening, an essential and indispensable factor

BOOK II

in great national struggles The Congress has achieved more in this short exciting period of three years than the last long unfruitful span of 45 years, and politically and morally the country has acquired a status, stamina and position that the next fifty years of constitutional agitation would not have given

But the next important question for the Congress to consider is whether what has so well and so admirably suited for the initiative and preparatory stage, will equally well serve the purpose for the future, and whether the next programme whenever it is framed should not be more aggressive, more militant, more drastic and better fitted to achieve the secondary political goal of even Substance of Independence There are many who believe that if the Congress is to retain the political Supremacy, and strengthen the hold on the nation, as well as effective control on the new machinery, the present mere demonstrative propagandist and spectacular items must give way at the proper time to the next logical bold step of preparations for the establishment of "parallel government" The recruiting stage which really commenced in 1919-20 has past, and hence the present programme has become out of date, not sensational and novel enough to arouse that enthusiasm and response in the future, as it has done in the past We must also realise and appreciate the fact that a potential and powerful cause, contributing to our present success, will partly disappear, the hostility and natural aversion to the present Provincial executives, based on racial animosity for its foreign nature, is bound to give place to a certain amount of sympathy and co-operation to the Provincial cabinets, composed of their own countrymen, with closer ties of their own.

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

caste, creed or community The new danger of giving a communal turn to the national struggle will also have to be considered, and a Hindu majority Congress may have to oppose and fight against a Mahomedan majority government in some provinces The inevitable split that has always followed all great constitutional changes in all countries is bound to occur, weakening the national strength to that extent

These are all factors to be carefully borne in mind by the framers of the future national programme Two or three years ago, even when these additional difficulties did not exist and the struggle was still fresh and against the foreign bureaucracy, when Subash Babu brought a resolution in the Lahore Congress, 1929-30 proposing a national programme that would be a first step towards a national parallel government, all important mature leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, openly declared that such a proposition would be the ultimate and logical stage of the C D Movement, still the country was not then prepared for such a drastic and radical programme, and warned the impatient youths against taking a hasty step, without taking careful stock of the whole situation, because a failure or fiasco would cause great re-action, and thus do more harm to future progress, and the resolution was thus dropped as premature

After all let us be quite clear in our expressions and avoid being caught in a net-work of catch-phrases and cheap platitudes Let us seriously and in all earnestness and gravity, with a level head and balanced mind, understand all the implications and significance of that enamouring, tempting, and catching phrase "Parallel Government" It is not the same as causing mere

annoyance or harassment or even serious loss to the existing government or foreign capitalism. A mere boycott or defiance of only immoral laws or arbitrary autocratic executive decrees, will be but insignificant and least important items in that programme. It is for that purpose, and with the object of giving some idea, particularly to Indian youths, that we have endeavoured in the above pages to give some illustrations and details of 'parallel governments' in other countries, a state of affairs resulting in a more or less effective paralysis of the whole existing machinery of government and transference of all its important functions and duties, such as administration of justice, spread of education and medical relief, the whole of the land system including collection of revenues, the control of income-tax, posts, telegraphs and transports, and Local Bodies, and at later stages Customs and Ports, and finally even making of laws and regulations, including Law and Order and the raising of national loans. In a real and genuine parallel government, all these functions and duties would have to be discharged by National Assemblies. In short, it is the effective substitution of one by the other, such as existed in Ireland, from 1918 to 1922, in Angora in Turkey before the establishment of the republican government of Nanking in China, and to some extent the Provisional Executive Committees during the American War of Independence and the Russian Revolution. Do not be carried away with the idea that mere boycott of some government schools and colleges or of professions and courts, or no-tax or no-rent campaigns here and there, with defiance and breaches of a few laws and regulations, would entitle you to assume the big

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

name of 'Parallel Government' No halfway arrangements with regard to schools, colleges and law-courts or a few desertions here and there will suffice the purpose All the Government doors including Legislatures must be effectively and completely shut

Parallel Governments may be established and may function in the same area and capital, as the original government, as Sinn-Fein functioned in Dublin parallel to "Dublin Castle" or may exercise independent jurisdiction in a separate territorial division as in Angora in Turkey But one fundamental difference, important to remember as differentiating the Indian problem and making all other illustrations misleading, is the fact that all other parallel governments were backed, supported and based, in addition to the moral popular support, on brute, military, physical force All of them had their separate military organisation and departments, just as well equipped and efficient as their opponents and were engaged in perpetual civil violent warfare, whereas that weapon, as we have shown before, is to be ruled out for India both on the grounds of political expediency and other considerations

Therefore, India must rely entirely on willing, spontaneous, patriotic and popular support, at most helped by such milder weapons as social, commercial or communal boycotts We cannot have such enforcing popular measures as existed in America or Ireland, making betrayal of the cause or lack of patriotism, spying and secret information, as treasonable and capital offences, rendering alleged treacherous offenders liable to be shot at sight, nor can we employ other methods applied effectively by other countries to scare away

BOOK II

police or military. These important differences must be well borne in mind before light-heartedly comparing with other countries. In other words, the moral hold of the Congress will have to be so complete and effective and universal over all sections of the population, in villages as well as in towns, amongst traders as well as professionals, on workers, peasants and petty traders and craftsmen, on rich as well as poor, that its mandates must be obeyed, purely out of patriotic motives regardless of all sufferings and sacrifices. Can even the most fanatic enthusiast of the Congress maintain today that Congress enjoys that ideal position? Mahatma Gandhi was perfectly right three years ago at the Lahore Congress, when he declared that the nation was not prepared for a much less radical and drastic programme, and we must with equal frankness confess that few years of extra preparations, and tremendous sacrifices, have not brought us still anywhere nearer that ideal stage. A great deal of spade-work is still necessary, particularly in the hitherto neglected villages and ignored masses. The Congress has still to satisfy a large section of industrial workers in towns and cities and hordes of toiling millions in the fields. In the words of all the great mass-leaders of the world, uttered at similar crisis in their respective countries, a breathing space of at least 10 years, an interval for further preparation and training, a period to be utilised both for constructive work in the country, to continue and strengthen the hold on the masses, as well as to consolidate and re-organise, is quite essential before the next final stage of non-violent war could be safely and confidently launched. That brings us to the final and the most important topic. This intermediate stage is bound to rake up the old controversial

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

question of New Councils, but luckily that issue has been most tactfully and cleverly tackled, and a serious political split in the country has for the time being avoided. A political split in the only political organisation in the country, at such a critical juncture, when the country is already faced with so many communal and sectional divisions and squabbles, would have been a national disaster and calamity of the first magnitude.

Though an open split on this naughty question has, for the time being, been apparently avoided, mainly because Mahatma Gandhi condescended to 'bless' the intended Parliamentary pilgrims, though that 'blessing' was undoubtedly whole-hearted and sincere, still it must be admitted, that it was more in the nature of a concession to a supposed incurable weakness in a large section of his followers, he would have rather preferred to have rid them permanently of this Parliamentary mentality, which he considers a deflection from the straight path, for him it was a choice between two evils, either to allow this 'dead-weight' to continue to burden and obstruct the future progress of the Congress or to adjust it permanently in such a manner as not to interfere with his other more important and radical programme, there are many in the Congress camp and outside, who hold the same view and look down upon Parliamentary methods as non-revolutionary and reactionary and who with an air of "superiority complex", describe themselves as 'conscientious objectors', the depth or extent of their objections and feelings on the subject, could be gauged by the fact that though normally good disciplinarians and firm followers of Congress mandates, still on this particular issue, they considered their patriotic sentiments so seriously outraged

BOOK II

as even to justify an open defiance of the Congress resolution and go to the length of attempting to civilly resist the Congress command. There is still a large section of such anti-council 'rebellious' mentality in the Congress but it is only suppressed on account of the generous and patronising attitude of Mahatmaji towards these 'weakling' parliamentarians. This sort of an unnatural enforced fidelity, is a source of perpetual weakness, disruption and demoralisation in the Congress camp and therefore it is still necessary, in spite of the Congress sanction, to demonstrate, on merits, the potentiality and capacity of Parliamentary methods, as an effective and powerful revolutionary weapon, that cannot be ignored or neglected in any National struggle. Even Pandit Jawahirlal, who is considered the leader of the extreme left-wing in the Congress, though not possessing strictly parliamentary mentality, still is a believer in the use of this method for revolutionary purposes, under certain circumstances, with a well-defined radical policy, programme and party. So does the socialist group accept the principle of Council-entry and cannot be ranked amongst conscientious objectors, so much hatred and contempt for parliamentary methods in this country is due to our bitter and depressing experiences of these institutions in this country. It all depends upon the manner and method of using them, as they have great potentialities both for causing immense harm, as well as for conferring equally some benefits, one set of individuals, with revolutionary mentalities, may convert even these 'talk shops' into powerful media for educative propaganda and publicity, having a great demonstrative value for the masses, whereas another set, with a more docile mentality, may succumb to its

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

corroding atmosphere and create only rot and demoralisation by their participation, it is not so much a question of knowledge, political or general education and high standard of intelligence or oratory that are essential to produce the desired results, what is more essential is a robust stern mentality and stamina, a stubborn power, both of resistance and persistence, coupled with fearlessness and selflessness, and, at times, a spirit of dash and adventure, almost verging on irresponsibility

With such sterling qualities a small compact group, though in a minority, would certainly render much better service to the cause and country than a crowd of weak-kneed, sheepish, slavish, cultured and educated individuals, even though they form a majority. Hence our present endeavours should be to shape this Congress Parliamentary policy and programme in such a manner as to keep up the high level and revolutionary standard of the Congress, instead of aspiring to swell the 'numbers,' so as to secure an insipid and morbid majority, we should try to form a separate 'class' of particular standard, level and quality, apart and distinguishable from the other groups, otherwise the danger of Congress party getting itself merged and lost in the general crowd, is very great, there should be no impatient immediate desire to achieve little 'crumbs' here and there even at the sacrifice of our ideal and ultimate goal

Such a revolutionary group could be trusted never to be enamoured of such institutions and they would be prepared to leave them at a moment's notice whenever either the country's interests or National self-respect demanded such a step

BOOK II

From that point of view the present Parliamentary policy of the Congress is open to legitimate criticism and needs a complete revision and over-hauling and to that end all efforts should be directed and concentrated, the Congress Parliamentary party should not be composed merely of cultured, highly educated, polished politicians, with 'silvery' tongues and gentlemanly manners alone, making a display of their oratorical powers and debating talents, this group is to correspond to the revolutionary Parliamentary parties of other countries, such as Leninite and Bolshie in Russian 'Duma', Young Turks or 'Kemalists' in Stamboul, Republicans and De Valerites in Nationalist Ireland, 'Wafdists' or 'Zaghlulists' in Egypt and Young Republicans in Kuomangting' group in Nanking Government in China

The Indian National Congress is the only Revolutionary Mass Political organisation in the country and if it is to survive as such, it must play the same role, though with a different creed whether in the Councils or in the Country, that Revolutionary Mass organisations played in other recent National struggles in the world. It is with that high expectation that these humble efforts are directed, so as to have for ready reference a comparative historical survey as a guide. With these preliminary remarks I shall now try to place before the readers some points and arguments that may be advanced for and against parliamentary methods in India.

'Case for Councilwallas'.—

(a) The experience of Russian Duma since 1905, and the strong advice given by extreme revolutionary leaders like Lenin and Stalin (quoted above) to work them for

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

what they are worth, as an additional revolutionary weapon to expose the bureaucracy, to consolidate the position, to carry out constructive programme, to keep in touch with the masses, to use both "legal" and "illegal" means to achieve the object, 'the smallest contribution will be most thankfully received' (Vide fuller quotations given above)

(b) Similar attitude of Wafdists and Zaghlulists in Egypt, consistent policy all through to work the Parliament for what it is worth, even when the constitution was most reactionary and franchise limited, as well as later stages when they assumed reigns of Government. The Wafdists owed their strength and power in the country mainly to this policy

(c) The recent experience of Ireland (detailed above), of Michael Collins, an extreme left-winger, deciding to work the constitution with all its defects in spite of strong opposition which led to civil war. Years after, his opponents, including DeValera came round to the same view, and after experiencing a serious relapse, due to this policy of Council-boycott, DeValerites have now changed their policy and tactics and captured the Government, even taking the obnoxious "Oath" for the purpose. The result of this change in the policy is before the world. The Irish question, so long slumbering, is again brought to the forefront, 'Ireland is much nearer her goal of republic than during the Civil War'

(d) As the boycott of Council under the present conditions could not be complete, and instead of closing the doors, that would only result in the new political power passing into the hands of rank-communalists, reactionaries, and in that respect the situation would be

BOOK II

worse than at present, when these boycotted Councils are filled in by at least, political parties like Moderates and Liberals, howsoever mild and reactionary they may be, still less harmful than pure communalists

(e) If there is no parallel government, the result of boycott would be that most of the laws and legislations from these boycotted councils would be obeyed and followed by the country, including boycotters. There is no sense in ignoring an institution in part, in so far as participation for exercise of power is concerned, but at the same time co-operating with it to the extent of submitting to its decrees and measures. Therefore boycott of Councils should always go with parallel government so that the one can be completely substituted for the other.

(f) If the 1934 programme of the Working Committee has become stale and out-of-date and is not likely to excite the same enthusiasm and support, and if the country must have a breathing time to prepare for the next programme, what other fresh political items in the national programme could be introduced, sensational and aggressive enough, to keep up the national spirit and political awakening in the masses? Do not the masses, particularly workers and peasants, expect the Congress to redeem at least some of the pledges and promises, so repeatedly made, such as the eleven points of Mahatma Gandhi and numerous other declarations including the "Fundamental Rights" passed by the A I C C? Could not the new Councils, particularly with some autonomous power in the provinces, be utilised to give some relief and improve their lot, thus increasing the faith and confidence in the Congress by even partial redemption of pledges?

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

Otherwise, there is a danger of Congress losing its hold on them, as they cannot be expected to wait till Dooms-day, relying on bare words and promises of the Congress. On the other hand the party in power, that is able to give some relief through the new legislatures, is bound gradually to displace the Congress, and will increase its hold and influence, by means of some service constantly rendered.

(g) In Ireland upto recently, they tried to back the Cosgrave Party to keep DeValera out, as in Egypt they tried to oust Zaghlul, and probably they are playing the same game in India now as the only way to remove the Congress "nuisance". Symptoms are not wanting in India where exactly similar game is attempted, and the formation of secret pacts, division of water-tight compartments in franchise, the most aggressive and provocative policy against the Congress without any justification, with the evident object of crushing its political power, so as to disable it from functioning in the future, open attempts by some Provincial Governors (Sir Malcolm Hailey and others) to set up Zamindars and communalists and other vested interests to form parties in co-operation with Europeans to fight the Congress, promising official help and co-operation, are these not too transparent attempts, sufficient to warn the Congress to be on its guard and not directly to play into the hands of its enemy?

(h) A general desire on the part of a large section of the public to give this new political experiment a fair trial and allow some of our recruits to receive a political training in self-government even on a partial scale, to assume even some responsibility and prove to the world our capacity and fitness to govern in spite of severe handicaps and thus refute the calumnious charge, so

BOOK II

often levelled by our enemies, that Indians are not yet fit for self-rule With a good large section holding such a view, there is bound to be a split in the event of Council-boycott

(i) An important grievance against the present executive and legislatures will disappear under the new constitution, that natural feeling of hostility and opposition to an irresponsible *foreign* bureaucracy will give way to a certain feeling of sympathy and association with our own countrymen, who are expected in the Provinces to some extent to displace foreign irresponsible cabinets There is a natural tendency in a section even of Congressmen today, to try to help as much as possible a Minister or Executive Member of their own sect or community That unfortunate tendency was noticeable even in some Swaraj Parties in last Councils, when some members of Congress parties were reluctant to oppose government measures, moved by particular Indian members of government That tendency is bound to increase, and to that extent weakens the boycott

These are, among others, some of the arguments that the advocates of Council entry have urged in the past and legitimately and fairly may urge in future in support of the Congress-adoption of that policy wholeheartedly and seriously, and the most inveterate opponent and critic on the other side cannot allege that these arguments are merely sentimental, or deny that they are based on apparently sound logic, reasoning, historical facts and past experiences, taking the practical and feasible point of view of a realist, and not led away by mere visions of an idealist Unless these arguments are answered effectively and completely by similar reasoning, logic, historical facts and actual experience they should carry the palm and gain a triumph of

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

Reason and Sound Judgment against Prejudice or Passion

Now let us turn to the other side of the picture, for the prospect is not so rosy and inviting as its staunch advocates labour hard to make it appear

Case for No-changers —All the above considerations and supposed benefits and advantages are subject to one important condition. The vote of an impartial honest Congressman, not having a bias in favour of one, nor prejudice against the other view, should depend upon a satisfactory reply in the affirmative or negative, to one important relevant question. Can the Congress and the country, produce today a sufficient force of stalwart workers, absolutely honest and disinterested, possessing a very high standard of public service and public morality, of that impenetrable character and unassailable reputation of the type of Tilak, Das and Motilal Nehru, of sufficient stamina and backbone to withstand the great temptation, to resist like late V J Patel with firmness and courage all the glitter and glamour, and false pomp and show of Council Chambers, and can the country trust them not to lose their heads and get infected by the poisonous atmosphere and unhealthy surroundings of the still surviving and lingering bureaucratic officialdom? If there is the slightest danger of the country passing through once again the same bitter recent experience of the past, when on assumption of office and possession of even insignificant power, some of the staunchest Congressmen were converted into brownest bureaucrats, outstripping old and experienced tin-gods of Simla and Delhi, giving points and furnishing lessons in autocracy and repression to sundried satraps of various Provinces, then let the Council-doors be banged forever

BOOK II

It is but natural that after such terrible experiences in our own land and so recent, all the historical arguments and alluring facts from other countries should fail to impress many. If the Congress-entry into the new legislatures means disintegration in the Congress ranks and assimilation of Congress politics into a mere moderate and constitutional school of thought, thus helping the continuation of the foreign hold rather than leading to achievement of the final goal, then "Council-boycott, with all the faults and failings, we love and adhere to thee still." Howsoever painful and humiliating such a confession of weakness and unfitness may appear, the confession must nevertheless be made, no matter how detrimental and disastrous to our national prestige and reputation the country's interests must be above these considerations. Unless the Congress is in a position to retain a powerful and complete hold on its flock, even after they have strayed into these alluring grazing grounds, unless it has sufficient power to prevent the exploitation of this fertile and fruitful political field for personal ends, unless the Congress has confidence and trust in its followers that the corroding atmosphere of Council Chambers will not lead to national deterioration and degeneration, the Plenary sessions of the Congress should seriously consider not only twice, but twenty times, before sanctioning this step and trying this experiment. We must admit that such risks would be less in new Provincial Councils, as members can be better controlled and dealt with than in last irresponsible bodies, if the Congress commands a majority, as it is expected, the faithless traitors can be removed by adverse votes of no-confidence.

If the Congress succeeds in devising ways and means whereby the impending harm may be successfully

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

averted, but the expected profits and benefits however small may be assured, then none can deny that the experiment is worth trying, and it would be a criminal folly to act otherwise

In the above pages we have discussed the pros and cons of the Parliamentary methods in the abstract, as a political method or principle, as regards the programme and details of the work within, it would be a mistake to draw up a manifesto or define the attitude of the party, regardless of its strength or position. A constructive day-to-day programme can only be pursued seriously with some advantage, if the party is in a clear majority and is able to enforce its schemes and plans through the House. But it would be futile to expect any real improvement or progress through parliamentary methods, when the Party is in a hopeless minority, in that event, the only use one can think of, as stated above, is to make it an additional weapon for revolutionary and propaganda purposes, to expose the hypocrisy and frauds of the bureaucracy and to demonstrate before the country its bogus nature, so as to have it thoroughly discredited and create a craving in the masses for a change. At most some negative advantage may be derived by preventing harm or serving as a check on the authorities, that was the parliamentary policy adopted by all revolutionary parties in various revolutionary struggles that we have referred to in the foregoing pages. They only thought of National programme and economic plans through the legislatures, after substantial transfer of powers, and after the National struggle had practically ended, when they had captured these legislatures, because of the adult democratic franchise, from that point of view the manifesto and programme of the Parliamentary Board has

BOOK II

been rightly criticised. They are based on the false hypothesis that this legislature is genuine and real and capable of yielding marvellous results, even when the popular party is in minority. A serious programme for day-to-day participation is drawn up on the most moderate lines and tall promises are again held out to the electorate, knowing full well the impotency of giving effect to the one or fulfilling the other. Some Congressmen rightly entertain fears that the Congress Party will soon be merged into other moderate Parliamentary parties in the House and bitter experiences of the past will again be soon repeated, even an eleventh hour belated effort should be made to save the Congress from that impending disaster, the published manifesto should be scrapped from A to Z, and if possible the whole situation should be revised, viewing it from an entirely new and revolutionary angle of vision. Instead of collecting a crowd from all parts of the country, consisting of all sorts of non-descripts, with the main object of swelling the Congress numbers in the legislatures, more attention should be diverted to secure the best radical quality, a type that will form a small compact body and class by itself, different from the rest in outlook, mentality and ideology, always trying to raise the political and National level of the rest, instead of themselves drifting downwards to the lower level of others, in either way, when we realise and know for certain, that the ultimate result, so far as this old Assembly is concerned, for the present, is going to be a big Zero, it is futile to waste our time, energy and resources in wrangling over details and particulars, as if the verdict of that House was going to work wonders and bring about some magical results. The verdict of the proposed Constituent Assembly, based on adult franchise, will be the real verdict of the Nation and not the toy and mock vote of this bogus and unreal

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

Assembly Still so much importance is sought to be attached to these anticipated results, that in pursuit of this phantom, the Assembly-Vote, old political comrades and close associates have broken their old ties, a split is threatened and a banner of revolt and rebellion is raised against the Congress by its erstwhile devotees and loyal followers It is obvious that this Assembly verdict, one way or other is not so important either from the National or Bureaucratic point of view, as to raise such a storm over it Its opinion, even of majority, is not going to affect in the least the pre-arranged, pre-conceived and already chalked out plans and schemes, that are settled and disposed of, thousands of miles away from Delhi and Simla These 'settled facts' will be 'unsettled' not by majority votes of the Assembly or Legislatures, but by an effective and potential demonstration of mass National strength outside, till then we have to use this institution only as one of the weapons and methods to consolidate and increase that mass National strength, which after all will be the ultimate sanction behind all our National demands So do not treat this Assembly with the same importance and seriousness that National Parliaments of really self-governing countries deserve, whose verdicts are the real deciding factors in the destinies of self-governing Nations Thus this blunder of the Parliamentary Board needs immediate rectification the whole Parliamentary angle of vision must be changed and the Congress Party can only participate and function in this foreign institution as a compact, revolutionary, radical group, apart and different from the rest and even when reduced to the minority of one, like Comrade Saklatwalla in the British Parliament of over six hundred, still should keep single-handed and alone their separate flag aloft, defying and

BOOK II

resisting the whole block of Imperialist six hundred, that is the only Parliamentary way for the Congress, till the nature of Indian Parliaments is radically changed and till it secures a definite majority, such attitude would be both more effective, and dignified, and would also preserve both our separate entity and self-respect

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK OUTSIDE

Village Ashrams—Another larger and more important section of Congress workers, temperamentally, educationally or otherwise not inclined to Council-work, should be organised to devote themselves heart and soul, to the hitherto much neglected and ignored village constructive and rural uplift work. Numerous "Ashrams" on the lines of Bardoli in Gujerat, should be started by Congress all over the country to be the principle centres of constructive national activities in all Talukas and important village-centres for the revival of ancient village arts and crafts, spread of literacy and education including physical culture, medical relief and sanitation, improvement and development of agricultural methods and implements removal of untouchability, a regular five or ten years' village plan for political, economic, material and general revival and progress of the masses. The Russian and other economic plans may be closely studied and scrutinised, selecting only such items for acceptance in our programme as are suitable, feasible and beneficial to the peculiar conditions of India and rejecting the rest. We are certain that as a result of this new awakening, thousands of voluntary workers, all over, from both sexes, will willingly come forward for such humanitarian and national work, actuated by patriotic motives and moved by high moral sense of public duty. The Council-parties should work in close co-ordination giving fullest co-operation and assistance

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

including financial aid, to carry out this programme and scheme. Particular attention will have to be paid to the long neglected physical culture and military training to qualify our youths to take charge of the defence and military whenever called upon.

Workers—Industrial workers in large towns and cities have too long been neglected by the Congress, and it is high time it should wake up in that direction too and compensate for past sins of omissions. Radical improvement in the mental, material, physical and general condition of workers is necessary with particular attention to wages, housing and hours of work. It is not enough for the Congress merely to include pious Labour clauses in the "Fundamental Rights" after futile long-winded debates, and leave matters to drift without any organised efforts to give effect to these paper resolutions. The suspicion and distrust amongst the workers and their genuine Unions, based on the allegations that Congress is a body more in the hands of the capitalists and hence, run for their benefit, must be dispelled not by mere resolutions and declarations, as hitherto, but by taking actual steps in the right direction, even at the risk of losing favour and patronage of some of our capitalist friends. For that purpose, the Congress parties in legislatures should work in close co-ordination with Labour members, if possible always including them in the party, if they are willing to subscribe to its creed and principles, and the Congress leaders and workers outside should be more closely associated with some of the genuine Trade Unions and organisations, and that group of sincere and honest labour workers and leaders, who are actuated by only patriotic disinterested and humanitarian motives to improve their lot, no matter what party-label they bear. Both together, working in close co-operation, should make honest endeavours to save

BOOK II

to exploit, victimise and dominate over weaker Eastern countries and nations. A League of India, China, Japan, Turkey, Asiatic Russia, Egypt, South, West and East Africa, Iraq, Syria, Morocco, Persia, Afghanistan, Siam, Burmah, Ceylon and Malaya States. A mutual friendly co-operating, offensive and defensive alliance, with commercial and industrial treaties and co-ordinating conventions for a common, concerted, joint action, to defend the rights, honour, self-respect and general interests of all Asiatics all over the world. Any insulting discriminatory measures, inflicting any peculiar hardships or humiliations, based on the insolent plea of "racial" superiority of the West or exploded myth of "chosen people," on any Asiatic in any part of Europe, America or White Colonies, should at once be met with by effective retaliatory measures, jointly and unanimously adopted simultaneously by all Asiatic countries, members of the New League, either inflicting similar humiliation and discrimination on the nationals of the offending countries throughout Asia, or in more aggravating cases, imposing a complete commercial boycott. That is the only effective way of affording protection and justice to all Asiatics from the arrogant and swell-headed Western Christian races. The idea may appear too fantastic to be practical and feasible. Man to man, today Asia can boast of greater world personalities than the superficial shallow-minded more empty noisy drums of the West, beginning with Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest apostle of Modern Age, with such world figures as Kemal Tagore, Stalin, Reza Shah Pehelvi, ex-King Ammanullah, King Nadirshah, all great statesmen and reformers, with chosen national personalities from the Far East China and Japan and Near East Egypt, with International World figures from

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

the other sex like Madame Krumpskaya widow of Lenin, Madame Sun-Yut-Sen, Mrs Sarojini Naidu, Madames Zaghluland, Halide Edibe, to represent Modern Asiatic womanhood Let India have the privilege and honour of starting that move, so that all artificial, unnatural, insulting and humiliating human barriers imposed by the arrogance or ignorance of White Man, based on the insolent and impudent satanic plea of 'superiority complex' or "Colour Bar" may be at once removed and absolute equality of treatment in enjoyment of all human rights and privileges to all human beings, may be secured as originally devised and intended in all parts of this God's Good Earth

Will New India launch the Divine Mission led by the humblest and Greatest of Human Soul ?

Political Survey Ultimatum —At the end of ten years, or earlier according to the conditions and circumstances then existing, responsible and accredited political leaders should make a careful and exhaustive political survey of the whole country, and if, as a result of the intense whirlwind, national campaign, as per dual national programme, within and without the Councils, they are thoroughly satisfied, after careful investigations and inquiries, that the country and the nation is prepared for the next important step in the national struggle, then a unanimous National Demand should be formulated through the All-India National Congress, backed and supported by all the legislatures, Central and Provincial, as well as all other political parties, if any surviving in the country As a step towards the final evolution and in order to secure complete unanimity the next national demand should take the shape of a Bill drafted by the best political minds in India, at the same time and accepted first by the legislatures and finally endorsed by

BOOK II

the Constituent Assembly of all parties, that draft Bill should aim at the removal of all the anomalies and defects existing in the New Constitution, and insist upon universal adult franchise in unrestricted Joint Electorate, complete Central and Provincial responsibilities, which would mean end of all special reserved powers including transfer of financial control, tariffs, defence, military and foreign affairs, Indianisation of the army under absolute control of Indian legislatures, and in short that "Substance of Independence" without any reservation or safe-guards, demanded by the Congress today, extending over the whole of India, including Fundamental Rights and Supreme-Courts for Indian States, bringing India, at least in line with all other Colonies such as Canada, Australia, South Africa and Ireland, where the power of the popular Assembly extends even to the selection of Governor-Generals of their own choice and compelling re-call of "undesirables" and making independent treaties. That Bill thus passed by all the legislatures and endorsed by the Constituent Assembly should then be presented to the British as an irreducible minimum demand of the Indian Nation

In this course, we are following the lines adopted by self-governing colonies, whose demands were determined by their own national assemblies in every detail and presented to the British, merely for the sake of constitutional formality of passing through the Parliament, without any alteration or amendment, not approved by the Colonies

The latest example of such a renewal of struggle is furnished by that valiant and irreconcilable fighter DeValera, who after biding his time, and at the first available opportunity, about ten years after the treaty, has revived the struggle in his own inimitable way,

SOME HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

beginning with the removal of objectionable parts in the existing constitution Neither he in Ireland nor we in India, will or can vouch for the next step in the National Evolution Whether the ultimate goal to which both they and we aspire, will be reached during his and our life-time, is more than any political prophet can foretell, but both can have the satisfaction of at least having played their parts, manfully and courageously, taking the country and nation as near the destination and goal as circumstances and conditions of their period would permit, and if the task is not completed during their life-time, the future generations can be trusted to carry on, for "Freedom's battle once begun, will be carried from father to son Till the final battle is completely won" The Indian National Demand thus duly and constitutionally framed, should be a national "ultimatum" dignified, but firm and drastic, giving our shrewd and businesslike opponents clearly to understand that the Indian nation is no more in a mood to be either "fooled" or "trifled with," the future course entirely depending upon their attitude, a further period, or an interval, of peace or immediate "Declaration of War"

Conclusions —Whether a far-seeing and conciliatory 'Rockingham' rocks the British political cradle to re-stage colonial episodes on the Indian stage, or a swell-headed and empty brained 'North' or 'Grenville', grind to crush the Imperial Destinies in the melting pot and re enact the dreadful American tragedy on Indian soil, these are political prophecies that no prophet will venture or hazard to foretell

Such a programme may appear to some to be too ambitious, whereas to others as too mild As a matter of fact, it is neither "milk-and-water", nor "gunpowder".

BOOK II

it is heroics and politics combined It neither sinks into timidity or over-caution, nor does it wildly and blindly leap into the dark It is honourable, honest, upright and self-respecting enough, to satisfy the most sensitive national conscience and sentiment It is aggressive and militant enough to appeal to the natural military and fighting instinct of impulsive and impatient Indian Youth It gives sufficient scope to all spheres of human activities and appeases all human natures, philanthropic, humanitarian, political as well as socialistic, always remembering that it is for intermediate preparatory period only

Intelligentzia, with its brain-power and dignified manual labour with its hand-power, can both play an important part, one in Council Chamber and the other in more important national institutions, the ' Village Ashrams ' Both social as well as political workers will find ample field to keep them fully occupied, and most ambitious and laudable inclinations for public service, voluntary and otherwise, will find enough outlets at high levels and moral standards Above all, it can claim to possess the rare qualities of being both practical and feasible, to be within the reach of average national capacity and strength, potential enough, not to realise the dream of a political dreamer and idealist, but certainly to meet all reasonable and sane demands of a genuine, sincere and devoted patriot

VANDE-MATARAM
